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THE MAGAZINE DE LUXE!

THE BIGGER HUMAN INTEREST PERIODICAL

BILLIONS FOR BAD BLUE BLOOD by CHARLES EDWARD RUSSELL

THE ARTIST AND HIS WIFE by JAMES HUNÉTER

THE OLDE PRINT SHOP INNOVATION

ENLARGED THEATRICAL REVIEW

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AUG 17 1948





FROM A PAINTING BY N. C. WYETH

—A careless, strong willful, white man who
had lived the Indian life for many years—

To accompany "Who Calls?"—page 641

THE RED BOOK

MAGAZINE

Vol. XI

September, 1908

No. 5



Bidders for Sad Blue Blood



THE CURSE OF THE CORONET

by CHARLES EDWARD RUFUS

INTRODUCTION by Herbert Kaufman

Slavery abolished? Tommyrot!

We've simply improved on the crude, brutal auctions of the past. This is the hour of progress—we are more refined—we do things in better taste. We deal in white flesh and white flesh exclusively nowadays. We have women to sell with the spell of Helen in their eyes and the grace of Daphne in their persons.

Step up to the block and investigate our assortment.

Item one?

As a judge you readily see that this is a lady of pedigree, and charm. Her French and German are as glib as her English. Note the tone of her skin, her luscent eyes, her splendid poise. She is without a physical or soul blemish.

What will you offer for this superb daughter of the States?

You sir, over there, with the shoulders of young Atlas—would she not grace your home? Your ruddiness tells of the links—she will golf in proper form and need no handicap. Your straight back suggests the saddle—she can follow the hounds to the kill and unless you ride like a crazy Irish squire, she'll likely take the brush from you. Your alert bearing and confident mien spell the man of affairs, the self-achiever of destiny—she has a splendid mind—shrewd, pertinacious and eager, and can lend you not only encouragement, but sane counsel.

You are a full-strengthed man.

God sent you to earth to breed strong sons and beautiful daughters—could motherhood find a nobler mold for their casting?

What will you pay for this exquisite woman, graced with the heirlooms of splendid foremothers—jeweled with pulchritude, glorified with purity, dowered with millions?

The gentleman offers his heart. We are offered a heart—a heart—a heart—ha! ha!—the gentleman sees fit to jest. Be serious, sir.

What is that? His bid is tenderness and fidelity—he offers the record of an honest life—and a clean past. Will no one make a real bid?

A gentleman in the rear seems to be interested. What, again? Surely you must be surfeited of women after all your years of profligacy. Your story is plainly etched in your pouchy eyes with their puffed, stained lids—in the droop of your thin, cruel, lips—in the pallor with which unwholesome vagaries have blanched you.

But this is the mart of bondage and the highest bid commands its chattels. The second gentleman offers a crumbling palazzo, a shriveled soul, a wasted youth, a roue's past, a gambler's faith, a Turk's constancy.

We do not sneer, nor jeer, nor shudder, nor revolt, as we gaze upon this leering satyr. All our moral rage is numbed. His title blinds us, his preposterous coronet, insignia of obsolete power, has outweighed every other offer.

For we are mad-men, selling women, gone daft with peerage-mania—self-bonded slaves, wearing the auto-welded chains of snobbery, willing to bear the ever heavying links of degradation, unhappiness, and grief—eager to lock upon themselves the eternal shackles of misery.

Satirists of Olympus! are you again returned to earth to stage your pitiless travesties? We know you by your work—for you "first make mad those whom you would destroy." In the name of civilization, go back to the fastnesses of oblivion, along with Moloch and Baal, whom Nineveh reverenced to its doom.

God of David! drench the sacrificial fire. Lead us out of Babylon, the Eternal! For we are stark—we have again set up the Golden Calf and are once more acknowledging the Venus of the Phoenicians, upon whose altars only the souls of virgins were pleasing!

AUG 17 1908

May 4, 1908
CLASS B
XXC. No.
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COPY B



I. TRAINING FOR THE TITLE



THE awning, striped blue and white—the red for danger strangely missing—forms a tunnel from the church-door to the curb. Every adjoining window presents a bouquet of heads—close-cropped heads, ratted and pompadoured heads. A battery of cameras, their cyclopean eyes staring fixedly at the canvas tunnel-opening, are ranged like machine-guns—the gunners fretting and impatient—for down the street a hundred great presses are eagerly waiting, and in five—ten minutes—they must be released by a man in greasy blue overalls to carry to the world the story being written in heart-blood in the church. Every coal-hole has its occupant. Women grovel, push, clutch, and elbow their weaker sisters out of the way in order that they may see beyond the sidewalk-opening in the canvas. Every one of them knows the story. The papers have printed it in detail from the day of its beginning. Every article of the trousseau is familiar to them. The lingerie was made by patient nuns in France and Italy by hand; the gown was fashioned in Paris; the orchids were brought from the jungles of South America and the Philippines; the lace upon the costume was made in Ireland by blue-eyed cooleens who knew not, nor cared, whither it would go, so long as they had had the joy of making it.

A score of reporters dash about, this way and that—messengers to carry the copy from the men inside. A world awaits the blare of the great organ. The carriages line the curb, their liveried drivers as stiff as statues, whips at the correct angle, robes smooth-crossed upon their knees; beside them sit the footmen, their eyes staring straight ahead, their arms rigidly folded.

A word passes among the throng. The women crowd closer—a pair of men are fighting—the camera-gunners guard their guns. The eager crowd seems about to over-tip tunnel and all.



COUNTESS SZCHENYI
(Miss Gladys Vanderbilt)

The police reserves, held in readiness for a riot, now beat back the throng regardless of the heads their sticks may strike.

"They're coming," a voice at the mouth of the tunnel cries—a voice from a person who has crawled between the wheels of the glistening brougham there at the end.

Police are of no service now. The riot of toadyism is on.

Ah—the bishop! Highest dignitary of his church, benign of face, well fed and sleek, clothed in the sacred robes of his office.

The bride and groom!

The bride—her chin trembles a little. Well it may! Her eyes are moist—well may they be. Her gloved hand rests lightly on the thin arm of the groom. And what of him? Scion of one of the oldest families in France—blood, blue—very blue—all bad blood is blue—face bearing the marks of the generations that have fled since first his family was founded by one who carried on his breast the shield of bravery and of honor. A crusader, mayhap, he who gave this wilting sprig of nobility a name but who knows not the honor that was his grandsire's.

And there's Jones—Ah, Jones—So he was invited. Strange that he should be here. Why, only a year ago at the club he emptied the vials of his wrath upon Browne who had permitted his Gertrude to marry the Count of Clavering. What? Truly. That was Browne's daughter, not his own. He saw it in perspective then—this matter of aiding and abetting in the exchange of a beautiful girl's life—her nativity—for a coronet, the silly symbol of what once had been an honored house. And now, despite all he has said in the past, despite his rage over Browne's acceptance of a coroneted fate for Gertrude, he has "given away" his own girl to the Duke of Lumtiloo.

It is over. The mob flows back from the church. The camera-gunned have snatched up their guns and fled; the reporters have vanished; the janitor is taking down the awning; the benign bishop is changing his vestments in the vestry; the great presses are rumbling.



DUCHESS DE CHAULNES
(Miss Theodora Shonts)

Let us see what it all means—this exchange of an American girl for a tarnished title; for Jones, we thought, was wise among his fellowmen, as his daughter was beautiful among her girlhood companions.

Sold for a title!

And, what was the title? French. And, what are titles in France? A million times lighter and emptier than a toy-balloon, the thinnest appreciable echo of a faint and foolish noise, the last attenuation of nothing, the indiscernible shadow of a forgotten dream. Merely that by some gape-mouthed and unthinking persons his beautiful daughter might be looked upon with awe as the Duchess of Lumtiloo, this supposedly wise, experienced, level-headed American business-man, son of the republic and child of democracy, made a bargain and sale of her.

And what was the price paid?

That is exactly what I purpose here to tell you—the price. No one has ever said much about that—the price. Those who from the inside of the American colonies abroad have learned of it as it really is and of the state and terms of the title-market, can tell you curious things about the price. Here at home we have not liked to discuss it very frankly—the price—because we have always suspected (if we have not known) that the price was dear and involved unpleasant details. Suppose, then, that just for once we put aside fiction and romantic imaginings and fantasies and examine this thing exactly as it is—the price.

But first let us dwell for a moment on the exceeding strangeness of the bargain. An American girl sold for a title! How does it happen that to a civilized, sane, intelligent, twentieth-century people a title comes to be regarded as a thing in the least degree valuable or to be desired? How does it happen that in this stage of the world's progress any human being, with so much as a spoonful of brains, should be willing to give a stricken fig's-end for any title anywhere? Here are schools and colleges and railroads and electricity and science and knowledge and a world full



of serious purposes, and all the signs that man has awakened from the poisonous dream of feudalism and has found the rational and appropriate channels for the exercise of his divine faculties. In the face of these activities the existence of a mediaeval title or of mediaeval rank is like a recrudescence of the ichthyosaurus. And, behold, in the midst of the general advance, here comes a son of the nation that has led the vanguard out of the world's madhouse, and he wishes to go back! He not only wishes to go back, but he seems horn-mad and itching with desire to go back, and he will sacrifice the dearest thing in the world for a chance to go back! What is this spectacle then? A scene from Bedlam or a tragedy of obsession over which we must weep and not laugh? And how under the sun can such things be possible in these days, and here? For as easily may one reconcile light with darkness, or right with wrong, or belief with unbelief, as this purely feudal doctrine with the fundamental ideas of a republic.

Now, now, my dear sir! Allow me! You don't know what you are talking about. You have never considered conditions as they are. If you had you would have discovered that (whatever the price may be) this bargain and sale of American women, is the normal, or very likely the inevitable harvest of seed industriously sown before all our eyes and with the rapturous applause of a very large number of us.

Take the beautiful and brilliant young woman with whose beauty and wit her wise, experienced, father pays a part of the price. The price could never be agreed upon without her approval; so much is certain. Against her will, no American girl in these days is thus put up in the mart. How then does it happen that the toy-balloon seems worthy in her eyes; that, being intelligent, educated, presumably wise, she is willing to sell herself to a hideous ruffian for the sake of a gew-gaw lighter than air?

Why in the world should she have the slightest desire or willingness to become the Duchess of Lumtiloo?

Well, to understand that surpassing mystery you must go



back to that girl's cradle and review her career and training from earliest consciousness to her wedding-day; you must analyze the atmosphere she breathes, you must sit in her class-room in her "finishing school" and peep into the books she studies.

To begin with, her parents are, of course, rich. That is the first essential. If they were not rich they need never trouble themselves to go to the title bargain-counter.

Very well, then; the girl is rich, exceedingly rich. In this country, speaking broadly and generally, the rich constitute the curious thing that we have elected to call our "society."

But the first essential and vital principle of this thing we call society is that it shall be exclusive. If it were not exclusive, if it admitted all comers, it would have no possible reason to exist and would instantly go to pieces.

Hence, there are at once provided all the materials for an aristocracy.

Now there are two inevitable requisites to any aristocracy. It must follow some set of traditional forms, and it cannot exist without roots that strike somewhere into what is left of the monarchical and feudal ideas.

In this country we have few traditional forms and no monarchical ideas.

Hence, society here is forced back for its basis and requisites upon European countries that have traditional social forms and the monarchical idea, and first of all upon England, where these forms and this idea exist in their utmost development. Therefore, the model of what we call our society is wholly English; its ideas and inspirations are English; our social leaders (so-called) turn to England as the fountain-head of all social wisdom. Their manners are English, the vast body of social legislation concerning customs and usages is wholly of English origin; to minute and childish details of dress, hours, service, liveries, menus, decorations, even to pronunciation, an English standard is applied. We are the most powerful, the most intelligent, the wealthiest and



COUNTESS OF ROSLYN
(Miss Annie Robinson)

the most progressive nation in the world. We have eighty-six million people inhabiting a continent of our own, with climate, soil, people, objects, conditions, origin, and destiny distinct from those of any other nation on this earth, and the best we can do in a social way (using the word in its narrow and contemptible sense) is a set of leaders adept in playing the copy-cat and parrot and sedulously imitating the ways of an alien people distant 3,000 miles on the earth's surface and infinitely farther in inspiration, aims, and form of government.

In England, all society abases itself before titles. Hence, in this country, since we must parrot and copy-cat the English social ideals, we come to look upon the titles according to the prescriptions of our accepted standards.

It is for careers in this imitated and artificial society that almost all American girls of wealth are educated and trained. They are born into this realm of which the laws are absolute and unalterable and of which the whole spirit and inspiration is alien. To live in this realm, to win its applause and to carry off its prizes are the ends for which they are groomed and prepared. They have nothing else to do. For them life begins and ends in the narrow and atrophic regions of social enterprise and distinction. It so begins and so ends for European girls similarly situated, and having chosen a European model for the ordering of our ways and affairs we accordingly condemn the American girl to the same sort of existence.

And yet, with the American girl, the case is really different. She has a very much better mind, she has the restless, nervous organization of her race, she is ambitious, she has no fancy for hibernation. The old spirit of the free prairies and the wide heavens, the winds and the sun, is not wholly crushed out of her, nor the impulse to act and think for herself. She is not truly born to subservience and the chains of old customs. Having nothing normal to do and being obliged by the iron regulations of her caste to squander much of her life, she makes a good, thorough job of



COUNTESS OF STAFFORD
(Mrs. Cora Colgate)

the squandering, just as she would of any other work intrusted to her. For her divine energies and divine intelligence no exercise is allowed except a struggle for social prominence. Therefore, with extraordinary ability and ceaseless industry she struggles for social prominence. In her circle, social prominence is arranged in strata. The high strata are attained by those who have the most money, but the highest of all by those who have been nearest to royalty and those who have titles. She has nothing in the world to do but to try and climb from one of these strata to another. The easy and sure way to climb is to get a title.

To this soiled and sordid attitude of mind the whole course of her education, step by step, insensibly contributes. Amid such surroundings, even if she were to try, probably she could not contend against the debasing influence. She breathes it, she absorbs it, she dwells incessantly in it. When she is still a little girl, she daily observes, with those keen American eyes of hers, the value ascribed to social distinction and the surest way to win that coveted prize. With her keen American mind she gathers, hour by hour, the ideals of the career for which she is destined. From her earliest consciousness she hears one ceaseless gabble about social position, social triumphs, and social ambitions. Nothing else seems worth thinking about. It is what her American mother talks of, it is what her sisters talk of, it is what the visitors talk of. To shine in society, to surpass somebody else in social reputation and social success, to excel in display and splendor and to make other people envy her, these are the aims of the life about her. Inevitably they become her aims, the bound of her horizon, the limits of her ken.

For her younger years she has a governess, almost always a foreigner, most often English; and it is the business of this governess, hour by hour, to instill in her mind the same ideas. Whatever she learns must bear some reference to this social career of hers; for this alone she is trained, and prepared, and exercised, and finished. The governess sees that she is started right; that her



DUCHESS OF MARLBOROUGH
(Miss Consuelo Vanderbilt)

youthful mind is impressed with the proper conception of social distinction, which in turn is the pile of strata, which is the scale of aristocracy, which in the last analysis is supported solely by some form of the monarchical idea. She is taught one subject because other girls in her rank of life are taught it, and another because with it she can better climb the strata. But no subject on earth is she taught because knowledge of it will help her to be of use, or to justify her existence, or to contribute an iota to the world that will give to her her life.

The time comes when she must go to school. And here, you might think, some of the mediaeval ideas she has absorbed will be knocked out of her head. The school is the natural breeder of democracy; and then an American school—great institution that! We are fond of thinking that the American school is the best in the world, the great leveler of classes, the source of intelligence, the nourisher of progress, and all that sort of thing. And so it is, but—

She doesn't go to that kind of a school. There is chosen for her a "select" place: where she can associate with only the children of the "better classes," where she need never be menaced with undesirable or leveling instruction, where the teachers are either foreigners or the graduates of foreign institutions or thoroughly possessed of the foreign point of view. No, I don't mean the colleges maintained for the daughters of every-day Americans. I am thinking of the sort of schools represented by that one from among the graduates of which six have in thirteen years been married to foreign "noblemen." In such a school the rich man's daughter can very easily spend four years and never hear a word or suggestion that will jar her faith in the social career mapped out for her. In such a school she need not associate with anyone not in her own caste; she can preserve at all times the exclusiveness that pertains to the foundations of her kind of society. She can be as much of a Brahmin in her school as she was at home. She can do these things, and you may be perfectly



sure that she will do them. There is no grand old school of snobbery in this world equal to some American "society colleges." She has been taught snobbery from her infancy; here in every waking hour she can practice snobbery. Her sorority is composed solely of the young women of the "better order;" her only friends will be in her own caste; pseudo-Brahmin she is and such she will be to the end.

And you can be very sure that the authorities of these schools will see to it that her finer sense in regard to her proper place in the world is never disturbed. They know on which side their own bread is buttered. They know whence come the funds that pay their salaries. Year after year the excellent instructors impart wisdom to their classes, but they allow no heresies about democracy and equality to sprout beside the well-ordered arbors and pleasant garden-plots of their demesne. The excellence of everything as it is constitutes the burden of morning-song and even-song. There blows within the academic-walls no note of protest or revolt, nothing about the world's wrongs, nothing about the wretched conditions under which the majority of men and women must live their lives, nothing about injustice, nothing about the problems that mankind is facing, nothing about the world's unrest.

When she comes forth from such an institution, she is almost as thoroughly expatriated as if she had lived all her days abroad.

Obviously, if she is thus alienated in her school-girl days, the effect is still more pronounced when, as often happens, her education is derived from private tutors at home. It is in this way that Anna Gould, daughter of a plain American store-clerk, and Gladys Vanderbilt, great-granddaughter of an American ferryman, were trained and fitted for social careers that seem, on reflection, so strange and incongruous.

She makes her debut in this Europeanized society. She goes abroad. She is presented at the English court and properly impressed with the importance of that solemn and ridiculous mum-



mery. She imbibes a still more extravagant notion of glories of the higher strata and the splendors of rank and title. She gathers, also, a still greater contempt for a country in which the society is of necessity largely devoid of such ornaments. She perceives clearly the inevitable limit or the ambition she has been taught to cherish. By no possibility can there ever be in her own country attainable heights of social distinction comparable with the heights maintained abroad, where there are rank and title. She has been groomed all her life for social triumphs, and here is the patent fact, that the most distinguished leader in American society is outranked (according to the ideals she has been taught) by every European woman who has a title. The conclusion is too evident. She is outranked wherever she goes over there, and her ambitions are too narrowly hemmed in here, because having adopted the social usages of another nation we have also adopted that nation's standards of social distinction and in those standards the titled and the untitled are separated by barriers of iron.

So along comes the wearer of a title and seeks to buy with it a fortune for himself, and in view of her training, she is quite agreeable to the exchange.

But, you ask, how about her lady mother who aids and abets this barter by exhibiting in the open mart, her daughter radiant in her beauty and laden with the gold of her dowry.

Well, her lady mother, tainted with the longing for that social supremacy which the possession of riches gives her hope of gratifying—has spent her life, or the later years of it, in an intellectual prison-house, looking out of one window, down one unchanging vista. Since great wealth has come to her, all her faculties have been concentrated upon one idea. She had, in the beginning, a mind of great capacity and great possibilities. All normal American women have such minds. Therefore, we, in our wisdom, to within very recent years, have sentenced them to imprisonment in one little cell. We have forbidden them any rational interest in the life they must live. They are in the republic but not of it. All



DUCHESS OF ROXBURGHE
Miss May Goelet

about them is mankind surging up from the jungle, just beginning to struggle to be decent, beset with all the perplexing problems of its environment, just beginning to sense something of its destiny. Having minds naturally quicker and more perceptive than the minds of men, the obvious function of women in such a situation would be to contribute their share to the human movement and to the solving of these problems. Therefore, with the wisdom I have before celebrated, we forbid them this function and restrict them to doll-playing in their little cells.

Having alert and restless minds and nothing else to do, they throw themselves with tremendous but sadly wasted ardor into the doll-playing—the pursuit of social distinction.

The result of which abnormal condition is, of course, always another abnormal condition. They become infected with the madness of caste. Hence, without the least compunction or regret but rather with joy, the lady mother leads Pauline or Beatrice to the market-place where waits the auction-block.

How about the father?

"Poor old cheerless dreamer!" said Stevenson of one typical American business-man, and erred not therein. This particular cheerless dreamer has been all his life, as well you know, engrossed in one pursuit. He has been making the money by which the social ambitions of the rest of the household have been sustained and nourished. All the finer part of his nature that has protested against his way of life and against his pathetic slavery to the dollar-mill has come to express itself in one still cherished ideal. He worships his wife and his daughter; they are the deities of his idolatry. Early and late he has toiled to supply their wants. They have yearned to shine in the social realm, to eclipse their neighbors, to wanton in a more dazzling display. He has provided the means for all these diversions. So far as he could he has shared and admired his wife's social ambitions, for to do so has seemed his duty: as much his duty as to supply the needed gold. And now Beatrice wants a titled husband. So he goes forth to



PRINCESS VON HATZELDT
(Miss Claire Huntington)

get one for her, just as he has always been willing to get her a new automobile, or diamonds, or a grand-piano, or anything else.

He ropes the titled one and brings him home, and, truth to tell, the paternal heart sinks as he looks at the intended son-in-law. He reads in the noble countenance the plain signs of everything a man ought not to be; he makes some slight inquiry about the noble one's career and habits and learns things that give him mental nausea.

He makes some note of remonstrance to his lady wife. But his lady wife sweeps him off his feet. She knows what's what and particularly "what" in such matters is the verdict of the realm wherein she would shine. She knows that her daughter will be the most envied young woman in the United States. An unequaled glory will shine upon the entire family; henceforth and forever they will stand upon a higher stratum, the goal will be reached for which all these years this grand human soul has labored and toiled and panted.

"Our grandson will be the Duke of Lumtiloo," says the good lady.

"Well, that does sound rather fine, doesn't it?" says the poor chump to himself now that the case is brought home to him and the perspective in which he has hitherto viewed such marriages is lost.

"And you began at the forge, Silas," she says.

That settles it.

After all, his wife should know best. He is outside of his element when he meddles with such things. And, perhaps, he had been wrong at first. So he hies him to the mart and draws the necessary check. The engagement is announced, the cup of envy runs over for all the social rivals of "our house," the cup of bliss brims for all the women in the fortunate family.

And Papa Silas sees his daughter become the Duchess of Lumtiloo.

He had much better see her in her coffin.



COUNTESS DI FRASSO
(Miss Georgine Wilde)

Now you think that remark is extravagant or uncalled for. I purpose hereafter to show you that it is neither. Those who have lived in the American colonies abroad, or those who have followed up the histories of the international marriages will not need any such demonstration. They will understand very well that the comment is an understatement of truth.

However, we need not bother about that now. I wish to dwell for a moment on this beautiful and artistic fabrication concerning the love-match. So grand a thing is love and so admirable that I am sure you will be delighted to learn of convincing evidences of a pure, a lofty affection between the high contracting parties here concerned. Thus, three times in the last ten years, each a very notable instance of the wedding of an American girl to a foreign nobleman, the ceremony has been held up at the last moment and threatened with ruin for exactly the same cause. And what was that? Why, the doting bridegroom was so fond of his loving bride that he suddenly refused to go to the church with her unless the money bonus was greatly increased and paid in cash into his hand.

Dear, sweet, romantic unions!

In connection with another and more recent affair of this kind, the happy family of the happy bride denied any money bonus had been paid or would be paid, and solemnly asseverated that the dear young people (so happy in each other's society!) had been drawn together by nothing but love, pure love. "It is a love-match pure and simple!" declared the social secretary, otherwise the family press-agent. "It is a love-match pure and simple!" dutifully echoed the society-columns of the daily newspapers. Cruel, indeed, was the fate that disturbed these radiant dreams. A certain practical old lady, who sometimes lends money on advantageous terms, suddenly brought us all back to earth by remarking that she had lent the money to finance this tender romance, and had lent it on the family jewels, the state of the times being such that the family could not otherwise obtain the cash in hand



PRINCESS CANTACUZENE
(Miss Julia Grant)

demanded by the loving bridegroom. When this was doubted, somebody suggested that the point would be settled by examining the exchange transactions between New York and Budapest; whereupon the amount promptly appeared. It was \$6,000,000—for a love-match pure and simple.

In one historic instance of this kind, and one only, a benignant Providence interfered in behalf of Beatrice. For once the precious count had carried his favorite amusement further than outraged nature would endure. The goodness of Providence was manifested in that the inevitable result happened soon after the marriage instead of coming at the end of miserable years. The bridegroom took too much or too little of his regular drug and was snuffed out in the middle of the night. It takes someone who knows the secret lore of the legations fully to understand what that particular young woman probably missed.

Yes; it's a queer market-place. But its records indicate a thriving and steadily increasing trade, as the lust for titles masters the aspiring American heart and as our society more closely approaches the ideals of the grand old English model that it copy-cats. If you care to see some of the price-lists from the title-exchange, here are some of the notable international weddings with the approximate amount of the bride's fortune passed over, (in most cases), as I am advised, to her interesting husband:

Duke of Manchester (Elder) and Consuelo Yznaga	\$1,000,000
Sir John Lister-Kaye and Natica Yznaga	1,000,000
Count Von Pappenheim and Miss Wheeler	1,000,000
Earl of Donoughmore and Elena Grace	1,000,000
Baron de Vriere and Annie Cutting	500,000
Prince Vicovaro-Cenci and Eleanore Spencer	1,000,000
Marquis di Sammerzano and Miss Gillander	1,000,000
Count de Rohan-Chabot and Mrs. Gallatin	1,000,000
Prince Scy-Montbeliard and Miss Singer	1,000,000
Duc de Dino and Adele Sampson	2,000,000
Count von Larisch and Marie Satterfield	4,000,000
Count Moltke-Huitfeldt and Louise Bonaparte	1,000,000
Count Festetus and Ella Haggins	2,000,000



PRINCESS COLONNA
(Miss Julia Mackey)

Prince von Hatzfeldt and Claire Huntington	2,000,000
Duc de Dion and Miss Livingston	2,000,000
Baron Bockinson and Miss Berwind	1,000,000
Marquis de Choisine and Miss Coudert	500,000
Baron de Zedlitz and Miss Ehret	5,000,000
Earl of Stafford and Mrs. Colgate	1,000,000
Sir Thomas Heskith and Florence Sherrin	1,000,000
Sir W. Gordon Cummings and Florence Garner	2,000,000
Marquis de Breteuil and Miss Garner	2,000,000
Prince Colonna and Julia Bryant Mackey	2,000,000
Lord Grantley and Katharine McVicker	300,000
Lord Butler and Ellen Stager	1,000,000
Baron von Kothenburg and Miss Phelps	2,000,000
Duke Decazes and Isabella Singer	2,000,000
Viscount Deerhurst and Virginia Bonygne	4,300,000
Baron Harden Hickley and Miss Flagler	5,000,000
Chevalier Stuers and Elizabeth Carey	2,000,000
Duke of Sante Monfeliodels Rovere and Mathilde Davis	3,000,000
Earl of Craven and Cornelia Bradley-Martin	2,000,000
Duke of Camposelice and Mrs. Isaac Singer	5,000,000
Baron Von Zedwitz and Lina Caldwell	2,000,000
Count Caesar Gianotti and Constance Kinney	2,000,000
Baron Brunnell and Mathilde Murphy	1,000,000
Count Szchenyi and Gladys Vanderbilt	6,000,000
Duke of Marlborough and Consuelo Vanderbilt	10,000,000
Count de Bearn and Beatrice Winans	2,000,000
Duke of Manchester and Helen Zimmerman	10,000,000
Earl of Yarmouth and Alice Thaw	1,000,000
Count de Castellane and Anna Gould	17,000,000
Duke of Roxburghe and May Goelet	20,000,000

No doubt, as I have said, we can afford this money. We are rich—in money. After the Duke of Lumtiloo has despoiled us we can easily turn to and make another pile of millions for the pleasures of the next ducal spendthrift. Yes, we can afford the money. But can we afford the something else that is involved.

Editorial Note: Mr. Russell's second article in this remarkable series will appear in the next issue of THE RED BOOK MAGAZINE. Therein he will tell the heretofore untold truth concerning the Europeans who lure our American girls with their tarnished titles. It is a startling article, and no real American should miss it.

In Ye Olde Print Shop

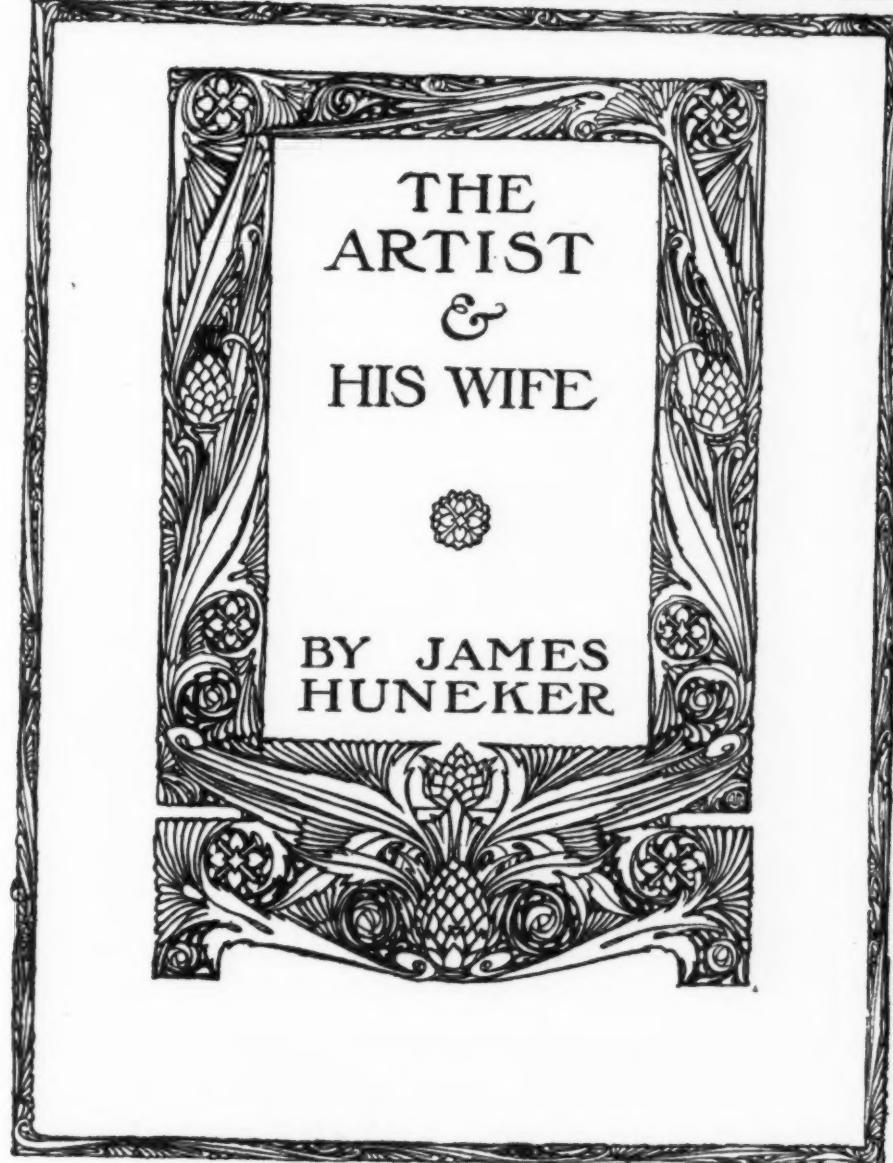
A New Department
of Human Interest



Contributors
George Bernard Shaw
James Huneker.....
John Corbin.....
Herbert Kaufman
and fifty others...

THE ARTIST & HIS WIFE

BY JAMES
HUNEKER



The Red Book Magazine



HEN THÈOPHILE GAUTIER, YOUNG, STRONG, AND BUBBLING OVER WITH GENIUS, ASKED THE GREAT BALZAC WHETHER ARTISTS SHOULD MARRY, HE WAS STERNLY AD-

vised to avoid women altogether.

"But, how about correspondence?" hazarded the timid youth.

Balzac reflected: "Perhaps; that forms one's style."

Naturally, Gautier did not take the advice seriously. He knew, as the world knew later, that the preacher did not practice. The private life of the master of French fiction is, thanks to Lovenjoul, no longer the sentimental legend his sentimental biographers made of it. A Grand Celibate, notwithstanding his brief, unlucky marriage, Balzac had the bachelor-temperament, and he had, too, many feminine-irons in the fire. He was as reckless as Liszt, and much more imprudent than his breeched, feminine contemporary, George Sand.

But was his advice to Gautier impeared wisdom? Should the artist marry? And if he does marry, what kind of woman should he take to wife? Why does the artist, at least, in the popular belief, make such a mess of matrimony? Are unions contracted between artist-men and women, unhappy ones? Isn't there, after all, an immense exaggeration in the assumption that they are? Let us reconnoiter this battlefield, over which are strewn so many gaunt, bleaching bones, so many

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wrecked lives—according to fact and fiction—and ask: What in the name of all that is holy and hellish is the “artistic temperament?”



NE QUESTION AT A TIME. IS THE ARTIST ALWAYS UNHAPPY IN HIS MARRIAGE?

YOU MAY SURVEY THE FIELD FROM SOCRATES TO ROBERT and Clara Schumann and find that the scales balance about evenly. Socrates had his Xantippe—the shrew is an historical event long before the spouse of Athens' wise man (a shrew is usually a woman who objects to being ill-treated, just as a cynic is a man who sees the truth and says it more clearly than his fellow-men.) Doubtless, Socrates, friend of Plato, often envied the celibacy of his pupil. Philosophers should never marry. Thus Schopenhauer: “When wives come in at the door, wisdom escapes by the window.” It sounds pretty, this proverb, but again history disproves it. The Grand Celibates do indeed form a mighty phalanx. In later days the list embraces the names of Balzac—his marriage was the one mistake of a bachelor-existence; Lamb, Pascal, De Musset, Keats, Stendhal, Merimée, Flaubert, Beethoven, Swinburne, Pater, Turgenev, Nietzsche, not to drag in Michaelangelo, Raphael, Franz Liszt, or Walt Whitman. Bachelorhood makes strange bedfellows!

We are by no means certain that these famous men were happy because of their unmarried state; some we know were excessively unhappy; most of them were embroiled with women, and several went mad. Any sleek statistician will assure you that married life is conducive to longevity. And often the mother of children, forgetting for the

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moment her strenuous days, speaks slightly of the monastic vocation. Nor is the time passed from the memory of the living, when a bachelor who refused to give up his liberty was socially looked at askance. He bore a doubtful reputation: A merry blade given to midnight wassail! Since emancipated spinsterhood has discovered that it is not necessary to marry to be happy, or to escape the stigma of old-maidishness, the bachelor appears in another light. Perhaps, who knows, he was not wrong?

To sound the roll-call of the happy and unhappy artist-folk, whose works in color and clay, tone, and words, have aroused the world to keener visions of beauty, is not my intention; but a few names may be reeled off. Do you remember Alphonse Daudet's charming yet depressing book of tales about the wives of geniuses: Daudet enjoyed a singularly happy existence, being wedded to a woman, an artist herself, who aided him in a hundred ways. It was his whimsical revenge, in a too successful career, to write such misleading stories. Thousands have read them, as millions read the newspapers. If one half-baked fellow with a spongy, viscous soul, whose conceit has made rotten his nerves, treats his wife badly, or one feather-headed female, who has a singing voice, elopes with the coachman, the world shakes its head and waggishly smiles. Ah, this "artistic temperament!" Just as all the crimes of the decalogue are committed, according to the shallow agitator, by the wealthy and only the poor are virtuous, so the artist is regarded as a natural-born malefactor. It is a survival of the suspicious feeling against strolling players, painters, fiddlers, and such vagabonds of yore.

Yet what an array of evidence may be adduced in favor of the opposite view. When two poets like Robert and Clara Schumann, or two scientists like

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the Curies have lived happily, doesn't this fact, even if exceptional, prove the rule? If the fixed stars of the artist-firmament revolve harmoniously one around the other, what of the lesser planets? Unluckily there are more comets and shooting-stars among the mediocre artists. The Carlyles were not happy—not every day. Better, however, their caustic differences than the glitter of a foolish paradise.

Life is not all beer and skittles even for the favored artist-soul, nor is Art a voluptuous hothouse. Byron raised a hell wherever he passed. He had a wife who was, to put it mildly, hardly suited to him. After only one suicide in the family, Shelley settled down, if that ethereal spirit ever could settle on anything earthly, with the original suffragist, Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin. Hazlitt philandered with women and was not content in double harness. Nor was much-married John Milton, nor Dante, nor Shakespeare, says legend. Coleridge took opium, became a flabby genius, and daily forgot his duties. DeQuincy followed suit at a long distance, though gossip avers that he was a mild and loving husband. William Blake, the poet and illustrator, was ecstatically happy during his married life. Whether his wife was, when he proposed to add another lady to the household, we much doubt. Wordsworth cultivated the domestic virtues. Bulwer did not. Thackeray was a model husband and suffered stoically the misfortune of his wife's madness. Dickens didn't draw happiness in his lottery. Disraeli did, also Tennyson. George Meredith and Thomas Hardy are happily mated. George Moore is a bachelor—and writes like one. Jane Austen would not have been the divine Jane if she had married; while Charlotte Brontë went to her grave a spinster, with a love-scared heart. (Therefore, believing in man. Lucky

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women!) George Eliot, of whom it was said that she was a "George Sand plus science and minus sex," shocked the British public, yet remained ever eminently British herself, conventional to the last. Ruskin tried matrimony and handed his wife over to Millais, the artist. It was a good transaction for all three. Emerson was married. Hawthorne and Longfellow were married. Poor Poe adored Virginia, his child-wife.

Across seas the plot thickens. There are as many happy households in France as anywhere. But it is hard to convince English speaking people of this very potent fact. The Parisian bohemians have set a pace that makes Puritans giddy. George Sand, a contemporary of George Eliot is a mystery. She left a brutal husband, met a mob of lovers in her journey through life, and ended in a glow of respectable old age. She had not one, but a dozen happy and unhappy love-lives. And she loved to tell the world all about her lovers in her books. Admirable and truthful artist! Rabelais was a Grand Celibate. Montaigne was a happy husband. Chateaubriand posed all his life as the misunderstood genius. He had his consolations and Madame Récamier. There is Madame de Staël, a feminine genius, but she bored Napoleon and got on Goethe's nerves. Goethe! He married, though not before he had burned tapers of adoration before a half-hundred feminine shrines. He is the perfect type of the inconstant lover who in middle life marries some one to look after his material comfort: a Don Juan on the retired list. Fate played him a trick, for he was forced to nurse himself. Lamartine had his Elvira, and Europe wept over the "Elegies." Victor Hugo boasted his Juliette, and no one sympathized with him except his dearest enemy, Sainte-Beuve, who promptly consoled Madame Hugo. Alfred de

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Musset's career was notorious. Absinthe and not George Sand sent him to the grave.

Alfred de Vigny, a greater poet, though not so well known, cursed women in his verse because of Marie Dorval, his faithless love. His marriage to an Englishwoman, Lydia Bunbury, was a failure. And the elder Dumas carried off La Dorval. Baudelaire never married. Would that he had! Verlaine married and his wife divorced him. Dumas was a veritable pasha. His son was a model. Merimée, for a week George Sand's lover, later broke a woman's heart, and the account thereof is good reading for both cynics and sentimentalists. Flaubert loved his mother too much to marry, but was entangled by the wily Louise Colet for years. The Goncourt brothers were born old bachelors, and if, as Bernard Shaw asserts, the romantic temperament is the old-maid's temperament, then these two were spinsters. They abused women on every page of their diary, but spent their days in agonized and acid-etching of her traits for their novels. Zola was a bourgeois husband. Maupassant committed suicide, spiritually and physically—work, women, and drugs. Gautier, impeccable artist, labored in the unthankful galleys of journalism. He was adored by his wife and children. He was a lovable, good man. Ernest Renan was possibly a celibate by temperament, but his married life was none the less peaceful. Huysmans was an embittered bachelor. Anatole France is a man of the domestic sort, like many scholars.

The musicians are not as a rule considered safe guardians of the hearth. Some, however, were and are happily married. Haydn had a scolding wife, but he was always merry. Handel had a habit of throwing ladies out of doors. He was much admired by the sex. Mozart, it is said, was fonder of his sis-

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ter-in-law than of his wife. Who knows? Mendelssohn and his wife were turtle-doves. Chopin died a bachelor; he had loved George Sand in vain, but his affair with her did him no good. Liszt—oh, Liszt! He ran the gamut of love as he played scales: with velocity and brilliancy. He raised a family though he never married the Countess d'Agoult; she returned to her husband later on and Liszt was exculpated. "He behaved like a man of honor," was the verdict of the family council—meaning, of course, what a surprise to find an artist not a black-leg! Beethoven loved. He had his intimate tragedy. Brahms was also a bachelor. Is it necessary to come down to our days? We see a wedded Paderewski attracting large audiences. Marriage, therefore, is no bar to an artist's popularity.

Painters and actors could furnish plenty of examples did we care to linger in the historical meadows. That Angelo and Raphael did not marry is no argument against matrimony. Andrea del Sarto, as readers of Browning know, had a minx for a wife. Rubens and Van Dyck spent sunny married lives. Rembrandt loved his wife, Saskia. Impressionist Claude Monet is married, while Degas has cultivated privacy. Whistler was a contented married man, and so Rodin. Monticelli, probably the greatest colorist of the century behind us, did not marry. He drank himself to death. Ibsen was a paragon of a family man. Tolstoi abuses matrimonial chains, possibly for the same reason that prompted Daudet to write his stories of genius. (But were Daudet's men of genius real? We doubt it. They seem to parade a lot of used-up, second-rate talents, not of the true genius variety.) The Russian writer's home-life is trumpeted to the four corners of the globe by his disciples. Is that why he wrote "The Kreutzer Sonata?" On Patti and her marital ad-

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ventures, it is not in our scheme of argument to dwell. Nor on Melba, nor Marcella Sembrich—whose serene married life is an object-lesson for young singers about to commit divorce. Rachel—thanks to Alfred de Musset and others, was usually an unhappy creature. Bernhardt and Duse have traversed soul-scarifying experiences; but each had the courage of her genius. At a time when there are no masculine counterparts in the theatre, wheresoever, of these two extraordinary women, it is not tactful for men to crow over their superiority in the art mimetic. What D'Annunzio did to Eleanor Duse was the accustomed act of artist-egotism: he utilized the experience for his books. He is a poet and a man of versatile genius. What Duse did was perhaps, not so conscious, yet, nevertheless, the result was the same: her art reflected in richer tones her soul's attrition by sorrow. It is a sweet idea this: That one may gather emotional shells on the beach of disillusionment and decorate with them one's art, to be sold later to publishers, picture-dealers, or sung and played in the concert-room. Hail the mystery of these artistic transmutations! These transfusions from the veins of love, of the fluid that is to prove the elixir of your art!

Glance backward at the list. The scales tip evenly. Remember, too, that of artists' histories the top, only, is skimmed. Hundreds of cases could be dug up. Genius is hard to live with, even in the casual ways of life. Genius under the same roof with genius (and of the two sexes) is a stirring opportunity for a psychologist. The wonder is that the number of happily married great artists—not the quotidian fry—is so large. The divorce-calendars of butchers, bakers, and candlestick-makers bulks in proportion quite as effectively. But the doubting male

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Thomases may, at this juncture, quote Goncourt: "There are no women of genius; the only women of genius are men!"

And that brings us to the crux of the situation. What is the artistic temperament?

II.

WE HAVE NOW SEEN THAT ARTISTS, LIKE THE LION AND THE LAMB, CAN MARRY OR MIX WITHOUT FEAR OF SUDDEN DEATH, CROSS - WORDS, BAD cookery, or loss of artist-power. Why then does the rule work for one and not the other? Go ask the stars. Where are the love-birds of yester-year? Why doesn't Mr. Worldly Wiseman get along with his stout spouse? Why does the iceman in the alley beat his wife? Or, why does a woman, who has never heard of "Nora Helmer," leave her home, her husband, her children, for the love, not of a cheap histriion, but because she thinks she can achieve fame as an actress? It is the call of the far-away, the exotic, the unfamiliar. Its echoes are heard in the houses of bankers, tailors, policemen, and politicians, as well as in the studios of the great artists?

But the news of the artist's misdemeanor gets into print first. The news is published early and often. A beautiful young actress, or a rising young portrait-painter, a gifted composer, talented sculptor, brilliant violinist, rare poet, versatile writer—when anyone of these strays across the barrier into debatable territory, the watchmen on the moral towers lustily beat their warning gongs. It is a matter for headlines. Strong lungs bawl the naked facts to the winds. Depend upon it—no matter who escapes the public hue and cry, the artist is always

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found out and his peccadilloes proclaimed from pulpits and housetops.

Why, you ask, should a devotee of aesthetic beauty ever allow his feet to lead him astray? Here comes in your much vaunted, much discussed "artistic temperament"—odious phrase! Hawked about the market-place, instead of reposing in the holy of holies, this temperament has become a byword. Every cony-catcher, pugilist, or cocotte, takes refuge behind his or her "art." It is a name accursed. When the tripe-sellers of literature wish to rivet upon their wares public attention, they call aloud: "Oh, my artistic temperament!" If an unfortunate is arrested, she is generally put down on the police-blotter as an "actress." If a fellow and his wife tire of too much bliss, their "temperaments" are aired in the courts. Worse still, "affinities" are dragged in. Shades of Goethe! Who wrote the first problem novel and called it "Elective Affinities." All decent people shudder at the word, and your genuine artist does not boast of his "artistic temperament." It has become gutter-slang. It is a synonym for "nerves." A true artist can get along without it, keeping within the sanctuary of his soul the ideal that is the mainspring of his work.

The true artist temperament, in reality, is the perception and appreciation of beauty whether in pigment, form, tone, words, or in nature. It may exist coëvally with a strong religious-sense. It adds new values to gray, everyday life. But its possessor does not parade this personal quality as an excuse for license. That he leaves to the third-rate artisan, to the charlatan, to the vicious, who shield their actions behind a too torrid temperament.

Now, art and sex are co-related; art without sex is flavorless, hardly art at all, only a frozen copy. All the great artists have been virile. And their

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greatness consisted in the victory over their temperaments; in the triumph, not of mind over matter—futile phrase!—but in the triumphant synthesis, the harmonious comminglement of mind and artistic material. Sensualist your artist may be, but if he is naught else, then all his technical dexterity, his virtuosity, will not avail—he can not be a great artist.

Whether artists should marry is an eternally discussed question. It is so largely a personal one that advice is surely impertinent. George Moore, above all other Victorian novelists, has described the true artist-life—do you recall his *Mildred Lawson*? Mr. Shaw, in his “Love Among the Artists,” shows us other sides. St. Bernard holds no brief for the artist; Shaw is more of a Puritan than his critics wish to realize. Certainly an artist is risking much in marrying, for the artist is both selfish and sensitive. He has precedents for and against the act, and probably he thinks that whether he does or does not, he will regret it.

A rainbow mirage, this of two congenial temperaments entering wedlock! When He exclaims—it is June and the moon rides in the tender blue—“It is just as easy for two to live as one on twenty-five dollars a week!” the recording-angel smiles and weeps. Nor has the young adventurer “spiders on his ceiling,” as they say in Russia. He dares to be a fool, and that is the first step in the direction of wisdom. But She? Oh, She is enraptured. Naturally they will economize—occasional descents into fifty-cent Bohemias: sawdust, pink wine, and wit. But no new gowns. No balls. No theatres. No operas. No society. It is to be Art! Art! Art!

So they bundle their temperaments before an official and are made one. She plays the piano. He paints. A wonderful vista, hazy with dreams, spreads

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out before them. She will teach a few pupils, keep up her practicing, and put aside enough to go, some day, to Vienna, there to study with a pupil of Leschetizky. He will manfully paint—yes, only a few portraits; but landscape will be the object of his ambition.

A year passes. What a difference! Gone are the dreams. There are many spiders now on the ceiling. To pay for the food they eat, or to own the roof over their heads is their ultimate desire. She looks paler. He may or may not drink, it makes little difference. There are no portraits painted—an artist must be a half society-man nowadays to capture such commissions. She would accept pupils, but their home engrosses every hour of her day. Artists usually demand too much of a woman. She must be a social success, a maternal nurse, a cook, and—and all combined. Women are versatile. They are born actresses. But on ten dollars a week, they can't run a household, watch the baby—oh, thrice wretched intruder!—play like a second Fanny Bloomfield Zeisler, and look like an houri. To be a steam-heated American beauty, your father must be a millionaire.

The artist-woman is a finely attuned fiddle. You may mend a fiddle, but not a bell, says Ibsen. Yes, but if you smash a fiddle, the music is mute. And every day of discontent snaps a string. How long does the beauty last? Then begin mutual misunderstandings. Pity, the most subtly cruel of the virtues, stalks the studio. Secretly she pities him; secretly he pities her. This pity breeds hatred. At breakfast, the most trying time of the day—even when you haven't anything to eat—he pities her flushed face as she runs in from the kitchen with the eggs and coffee. In his eyes she is no longer a sylph. (The twenty-five dollars a week are shrunk.)

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She pities him because he is flushed from his night's outing. His appetite, like his temper, is capricious. In her eyes, he is simply the ordinary male brute, which is true enough. Then he is imprudent and flings Schopenhauer at her.

Have you noticed how often well-bred, bookish, and artist-men quote Schopenhauer at their wives? The bow-legged, long-haired sex—eh! Aha! He rubs his hands. Women are, all said and done, the inferior sex! What did Iago remark—but he doesn't like to quote that speech of the Ancients with its chronicling of small beer for fear his wife may turn quietly upon him with the monosyllable—"Beer!" He hates to be twitted about his faults, so he takes up Nietzsche's "Beyond Good and Evil" and reads: "That because of woman's cookery, the development of mankind has been longest retarded." Or, "Woman—the Eternally Tedious!" Or, "Woman has hitherto been most despised by Woman!" It is not in good taste, all this.

But she has no time to quote Ibsen and Shaw for his discomfiture. The milkman is keeping her busy by asking for the amount of his bill. As baby must have pure milk, she compromises by smiling at her foolish young man and teases him for the money. He dives into empty pockets and looks blankly at her. Sometimes this goes on for years; often in reckless despair he throws his lamp over the moon and she her bonnet over the windmill. Female-suffrage may make such conditions impossible in the future by forbidding men the ballot.

Yet, how many happy artist-households there are! Sometimes the couple paint à quatre mains, as Eduard Manet puts it; sometimes the wife is simply a woman and not an artist. Nor dare we claim that this latter species of union is always the happier. It may not be. She may be a nightmare to

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him, a millstone around his neck, through sheer stupidity or lack of sympathy. Men, ordinary males, like to be coddled; artist-men, in whom there is often a thin streak of feminine vanity, must be subtly flattered. The nerves lie near the surface in artist people. Idealists, they paint with their imagination everything in too bright hues. Labor, really, puts them out. It is the same young man and the same young woman who, under pine-blossoms swore undying love—the same, except that a year or several have passed.

As is always the case, the rather despised Womanly-Woman—the woman of the feather-bed temperament, who is neither dove nor devil—gathers the honors. She knows that the artist-man, that hopeless hybrid, so admirably apostrophized by Shaw in the first act of "Man or Superman," must be humored. (Feed the brute!) He is the spoilt child of Fate. If he goes too far from his mamma's apron-strings, he gets into trouble, falls into the mud-puddle of life, and is sure to drag some silly girl with him. So she, being wise with the instinctive wisdom of her sex—the Womanly-Woman, I mean—I have seldom encountered a Womanly-Woman who was also an artist—plays him to the end of the rope, and then he is back at her knees. Such marriages are successful for the reason that the artist-husband doesn't have time to be unhappy.

It is when the lean years are upon the artist, the years of thin-thought and bleak regrets, that he will miss a loving wife. Then will he cry in the stillness of his heart: "Oh Time, eternal shearer of souls, spare me thy slow clippings! Shear me in haste, shear me close and swiftly! 'Death, one who is about to live, salutes thee!'" He quotes, in the last line, Villers de l'Ilse Adams, you may note, for he is the literary artist, and even in the face of death

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he wears the shop-mask. His "affinity," whom he has never encountered at the epoch of their earthly pilgrimage, congratulates herself that the latter lonesome years will not be burdened by the whims and ills of an old man. She may possess the artist-temperament and be a spinster. Often she escapes that fate by early marriage to a solid, sensible business or professional man, who pays the bills and admires her pasty painting, her facile, empty music-making, her unplayed plays, unread novels, and verse—that are privately printed. Sensible old Nature, as ever, thus hits the happy mean.

It is not necessary to draw any particular inference from the foregoing, save to add that the "artistic temperament" is not what the newspapers represent it to be; that when it exists in association with high ideals and natural gifts, the result is sincere art; that it is hardly a quality making for happiness; that men and women, whether artists or mediocrities, must fight the inevitable duel of the sexes until death do them part; and finally, that the breakfast-room episode referred to is a comedy played daily all over the globe, and the hero need not be a painter—for a rising young plumber can assume the rôle with equal success. A sense of the humorous would save half the family-jars in households, artistic and inartistic. The spectacle of two bipeds strutting and fuming beneath the glimpses of the sun, while over yonder the vast cosmic spaces are undergoing the birth of new constellations—surely the very angels in heaven must sit in reserved stalls, ironically spying upon humanity's antics. Let the curtain ring down on the truism, that, after all, an artist is a human being; this fact is too often forgotten by writers who see in the man of talent, or genius, a mixture of gorilla, God, or madman.

Who Calls?

BY SIR GILBERT PARKER

Author of "The Right of Way," "The Weavers," etc

ILLUSTRATED BY N. C. WYETH

BUT I'm white; I'm not an Indian. My father was a white man. I've been brought up as a white girl. I've had a white girl's schooling."

Her eyes flashed as she sprang to her feet and walked up and down the room for a moment, then stood still, facing her mother—a dark-faced, pock-marked woman, with heavy, somnolent eyes—and waited for her to speak. The reply came slowly and sullenly:

"I am a Blackfoot woman. I lived on the Muskwat River among the braves for thirty years. I have killed buffalo. I have seen battles. Men, too, I have killed when they came to steal our horses and stole in on our lodges in the night—the Crees! I am a Blackfoot. You are the daughter of a Blackfoot woman. No medicine can cure that. Sit down. You have no sense. You are not white. They will not have you. Sit down."

The girl's handsome face flushed; she threw up her hands in an agony of protest. A dreadful anger was in her panting breast, but she could not speak. She seemed to choke with excess of feeling. For an instant she stood still, trembling with agitation, then she sat down suddenly on a great couch covered with soft deerskins and buffalo robes. The habit of obedience to this somber but striking woman before her was strong in her. She had been ruled firmly, almost oppressively, and she had not yet revolted. Seated on the couch, she gazed out of the window at the flying snow, her brain too much on fire for thought, passion beating like a pulse in all her lithe and graceful young body, which had known the storms of life and time for only twenty years.

The wind shrieked and the snow swept

past in clouds of blinding drift, completely hiding from sight the town below them, whose civilization had built itself many habitations and was making roads and streets on the green-brown plain where herds of buffalo, shaking the earth with their tread, had stamped and streamed not long ago. The town was a mile and a half away, and these two were alone in a great circle of storm, one of them battling against a tempest which might yet overtake her, against which she had set her face almost ever since she could remember, though it had only come to violence since her father died two years before—a careless, strong, willful white man, who had lived the Indian life for many years, but at last had been swallowed by the great wave of civilization streaming westward and northward, wiping out the game and the Indian, and overwhelming the rough, fighting, hunting, pioneer-life for ever. He had made money, by good luck chiefly, having held land here and there which he had got for nothing, and had then almost forgotten about it, and, when reminded of it, still held on to it with that defiant stubbornness which often possesses improvident and careless natures. He had never had any real business-instinct, and to swagger a little over the land he held and to treat offers of purchase with contempt was the loud assertion of a capacity he did not possess. So it was that his vanity and stubbornness, beneath which was his angry protest against the prejudice felt by the new people of the West for the Squaw-man—the white pioneer who married an Indian, and lived the Indian life, giving it, however, something it never had be-

fore—so it was that this gave him competence and a comfortable home after the old trader had been driven out by the railway and the shopkeeper. With the first land he sold he sent his daughter away to school in a town farther east and south, where she had been brought in touch with a life that at once cramped and attracted her; where, too, she had felt the first chill of racial ostracism, and had proudly fought it to the end, her weapons being talent, industry, and a hot, defiant ambition.

There had been three years of bitter, almost half-sullen, struggle, lightened by one sweet and perfect friendship with a girl whose face she had since drawn in a hundred different poses on pieces of brown paper, on scraps of all kinds, on the walls of the big, well-lighted attic to which she retreated for hours every day, when she was not abroad on the prairies, riding the Indian pony that her uncle, Piegan Chief, Ice Breaker, had given her years before. Three years of struggle, and then her father had died, and the refuge for her vexed, defiant heart was gone. While he had lived she could affirm the rights of a white man's daughter, the rights of a daughter of a pioneer who had helped make the West; and her pride in him had given a glow to her cheek and a spring to her step which made people always look at her, no matter how many others might be present. In the chief street of Portage la Drôme men would stop their trafficking and women nudge each other when she passed, and wherever she went she stirred interest, excited admiration, or aroused prejudice—the prejudice did not matter so long as her father, Joel Renton, lived. Whatever his faults, and they were many—sometimes he drank too much, and swore a great deal, and bullied and stormed—she blinked at them all, for he was of the conquering race, a white man who had slept in white sheets and eaten off white table-cloths, and used a knife and fork, since he was born; and the women of his people had had soft petticoats and fine stockings and white clothes for their beds, and silk gowns for festal days, and feathered hats of velvet, and shoes of polished leather, always and

always, back through many generations. Indeed, yes, she had held her head high, for she was of his women, of the women of his people, with all their rights and all their claims. She had held it high till that stormy day—just such a day as this, with the surf of snow breaking against the house—when they carried him in out of the wild turmoil of wind and snow, laying him on the couch where she now sat, and her head fell on his lifeless breast, and she cried out to him to come back to her.

Before the world her head was still held high, but in the attic-room, and out on the prairies far away, where only the coyote or the prairie-hen saw, her head drooped, and her eyes grew heavy with pain and somber protest. Once, in an agony of loneliness, and cruelly hurt by a conspicuous slight put upon her at the Portage, by the wife of the Reeve of the town, who had daughters twain of pure white blood got from behind the bar of a saloon at Winnipeg, she had thrown open her window at night with the frost below zero, and stood in her thin night-dress, craving the death which she hoped the cold would give her soon. It had not availed, however, and once again she had ridden out in a blizzard to die, but had come upon a man lost in the snow, and her own misery had passed from her, and her heart, full of the blood of plainsmen, had done for another what it would not do for itself. The Indian in her had, with strange, sure instinct, found its way to Portage la Drôme, the man, with both hands and one foot frozen, on her pony, she walking at his side, only conscious that she had saved one, not two lives, that day.

Here was another such day, here again was the storm in her heart which had driven her into the plains that other time, and here again was that tempest of white death outside.

"You have no sense. You are not white. They will not have you. Sit down—" The words had fallen on her ears with a cold, deadly smother. There came a chill upon her which stilled the wild pulses in her, which suddenly robbed the eyes of their brightness, and gave a fixed drawn look to the face.

"You are not white. They will not have you, Pauline." The Indian mother repeated the words after a moment, her eyes grown still more gloomy; for in her, too, there was a dark tide of passion moving. In all the years that had gone, this girl had always turned to the white father rather than to her, and she had been left more and more alone. Her man had been kind to her, and she had been a faithful wife, but she had resented the natural instinct of her half-breed child, almost white herself, and with the feelings and ways of the whites, to turn always to her father, as if to a superior guide, to a higher influence and authority. Was not she the descendant of Blackfoot and Piegan chiefs through generations of rulers and warriors? Was there not Piegan and Blackfoot blood in the girl's veins? Must only the white man's blood be reckoned when they made up their daily account and balanced the books of their lives, credit and debtor—misunderstanding and kind act, neglect and tenderness, reproof and praise, gentleness and impulse, anger and caress—to be set down in the everlasting record? Why must the Indian always give way? Indian habits, Indian desires, the Indian way of doing things, the Indian point of view, Indian food, Indian medicine—was it all bad, and only that which belonged to the white life good?

"Look at your face in the glass, Pauline," she added at last. "You are good-looking, but it isn't the good looks of the whites. The lodge of a chieftainess is the place for you. There you would have praise and honor; among the whites you are only a half-breed. What is the good? Let us go back to the life out there beyond the Muskwat River—up beyond. There is hunting still, a little, and the world is quiet, and nothing troubles. Only the wild-dog barks at night, or the wolf sniffs at the door, and all day there is singing. Somewhere out beyond the Muskwat the feasts go on, and the old men build the great fires, and tell tales, and call the wind out of the North, and make the thunder speak; and the young men ride to the hunt or go out to battle, and build lodges for the daughters of the tribe; and each man has his woman, and

each woman has in her breast the honor of the tribe, and the little ones fill the lodge with laughter. Like a pocket of deerskin is every house, warm and small and full of good things. *Hai-yai*, what is this life to that! There you will be head and chief of all, for there is money enough for a thousand horses; and your father was a white man, and these are the days when the white man rules. Like clouds before the sun are the races of men, and one race rises and another falls. Here you are not first, but last; and the child of the white father and mother, though they be as the dirt that flies from a horse's heels, it is before you. Your mother is a Blackfoot!"

As the woman spoke slowly and with many pauses, the girl's mood changed, and there came into her eyes a strange, dark look which was deeper than anger. She listened with a sudden patience which stilled the agitation in her breast and gave a little touch of rigidity to her figure. Her eyes withdrew from the wild storm without and gravely settled on her mother's face, and with the Indian woman's last words understanding pierced, but did not dispel, the somber and ominous look in her eyes.

There was silence for a moment, and then she spoke almost as evenly as her mother had done.

"I will tell you everything. You are my mother, and I love you; but you will not see the truth. When my father took you from the lodges and brought you here, it was the end of the Indian life. It was for you to go on with him, but you would not go. I was young, but I saw, and I said that in all things I would go with him. I did not know that it would be hard, but at school, at the very first, I began to understand. There was only one, a French girl—I loved her—a girl who said to me: 'You are as white as I am—as anyone—and your heart is the same, and you are beautiful.' Yes, Manette said I was beautiful."

She paused a moment, a misty, far-away look came into her eyes, her fingers clasped and unclasped, and she added—

"And her brother, Julien—he was older—when he came to visit Manette, he spoke to me as if I were all white, and

was good to me. I have never forgotten, never. It was five years ago, but I remember him. He was tall and strong, and as good as Manette—as good as Manette. I loved Manette, but she suffered for me, for I was not like the others, and my ways were different—then. I had lived up there on the Warais among the lodges, and I had not seen things—only from my father, and he did so much in an Indian way. So I was sick at heart, and sometimes I wanted to die; and once — But there was Manette, and she would laugh and sing, and we would play together, and I would speak French and she would speak English, and I learned from her to forget the Indian ways. What were they to me? I had loved them when I was of them, but I came on to a better life. The Indian life is to the white life as the *parfleche* pouch to—to this." She laid her hand upon a purse of delicate silver mesh hanging at her waist. "When your eyes are opened, you must go on, you cannot stop. There is no going back. When you have read of all that there is in the white man's world, when you have seen, then there is no returning. You may end it all, if you wish, in the snow, in the river, but there is no returning. The lodge of a chief! Ah, if my father had heard you say that—!"

The Indian woman shifted heavily in her chair, then shrank away from the look fixed on her. Once or twice she made as if she would speak, then sank down in the great chair, helpless and dismayed.

"The lodge of a chief!" the girl continued in a low, bitter voice. "What is the lodge of a chief? A smoky fire, a pot, a bed of skins, *aih-yi!* If the lodges of the Indians were millions, and I could be head of all, and rule the land, yet would I rather be a white girl in the hut of her white man, struggling for daily bread among the people who sweep the buffalo out, but open up the land with the plough, and make a thousand live where one lived before. It is peace you want, mother, peace and solitude, in which the soul goes to sleep. Your days of hope are over, and you want to drowse by the fire. I want to see the white men's cities grow, and the armies coming over the hill with the ploughs and the reapers

and the mowers, and the wheels and the belts and engines of the great factories, and the white woman's life spreading everywhere, for I am a white man's daughter. I can't be both Indian and white. I will not be like the sun where the shadow cuts across it and the land grows dark. I will not be half-breed. I will be white or I will be Indian; and I will be white, white only. My heart is white, my tongue is white, I think, I feel, as white people think and feel. What they wish, I wish; as they live, I live; as white women dress, I dress."

She involuntarily drew up the dark red skirt she wore, showing a white petticoat and a pair of fine stockings on an ankle as graceful and shapely as she had ever seen among all the white women she knew. She drew herself up with pride, and her body had a grace and ease which the white woman's convention had not cramped.

Yet with all her protests, no one would have classed her as English. She might have been Spanish, or Italian, or Roumanian, or Slav, though nothing of her Indian blood showed in purely Indian characteristics, and something sparkled in her, gave a radiance to her face and figure which the storm and struggle in her did not smother. The white women of Portage la Drôme were too blind, too prejudiced, to see all that she really was, and admiring white men could do little, for Pauline would have nothing to do with them till the women met her absolutely as an equal; and from the other half-breeds, who intermarried with each other and were content to take a lower place than the pure whites, she held aloof, save when any of them was ill or in trouble. Then she recognized the claim of race and came to their doors with pity and soft impulses to help them. French and Scotch and English half-breeds, as they were, they understood how she was making a fight for all who were half-Indian, half white, and watched her with a furtive devotion, acknowledging her superior place, and proud of it.

"I will not stay here," said the Indian mother with sullen stubbornness. "I will go back beyond the Warais. My life is my own; I will do what I like with it."



The Indian in her had found its way to Portage la Drôme

The girl started, but became composed again on the instant. "Is your life all your own, mother?" she said. "I did not come into the world of my own will. If I had, I would have come all white or all Indian. I am your daughter, and I am here, good or bad—is your life all your own?"

"You can marry and stay here, when I go. You are nineteen. I had my man, your father, when I was seventeen. You can marry. There are men. You have money. They will marry you—and forget the rest."

With a cry half of rage, half of misery, the girl sprang to her feet and started forward, but stopped suddenly at sound of a hasty knocking and a voice asking admittance. An instant later a huge, bearded, broad-shouldered man stepped inside, shaking himself free of the snow, laughing half-sheepishly as he did so, and laying his fur cap and gloves with exaggerated care on the wide window-sill.

"John Alloway," said the Indian woman in a voice of welcome, and with a brightening eye, for it would seem as if he came in answer to her words of a few moments before. With a mother's instinct she had divined at once the reason for the visit, though no warning thought crossed the mind of the girl, who placed a chair for their visitor with a heartiness which was real—was not this the white man she had saved from death in the snow a year ago? Her heart was soft towards the life she had kept in the world. She smiled at him, all the anger gone from her eyes, and there was almost a touch of tender anxiety in her voice as she said—

"What brought you out in this blizzard? It wasn't safe. It doesn't seem possible you got here from the Portage."

The huge ranchman and auctioneer laughed cheerily. "Once lost, twice get there," he said, with a quizzical toss of the head, thinking he had said a good thing. "It's a year ago to the very day that I was lost out back"—he jerked a thumb over his shoulder—"and you picked me up and brought me in; and what was I to do but come out on the anniversary and say 'Thank you?' I'd

fixed up all year to come to you, and I wasn't to be stopped, 'cause it was like the day we first met, old Coldmaker hitting the world with his whips of frost, and shaking his ragged blankets of snow over the wild West."

"Just such a day," said the Indian woman after a pause, as Pauline remained silent, placing a little bottle of cordial before their visitor, with which he presently regaled himself, raising his glass with an impressive air.

"Many happy returns to us both!" he said, and threw the liquor down his throat, smacked his lips, and drew his hand down his great mustache and beard like some vast animal washing its face with its paw. Smiling, and yet not wholly ill at ease, he looked at the two women and nodded his head encouragingly, but whether the encouragement was for himself or for them he could not have told.

His last words, however, had altered the situation. The girl had caught a suggestion in them which startled her. This rough, white plainsman was come to make love to her, and to say—what? He was at once awkward and confident, afraid of her, of her refinement, grace, beauty and education, and yet confident in the advantage of his position, a white man bending to a half-breed girl. He was not conscious of the condescension and majesty of his demeanor, but it was there, and his untutored words and ways must make it all too apparent to the girl. The revelation of the moment made her at once triumphant and humiliated. This white man had come to make love to her, that was apparent; but that he, ungrammatical, crude, and rough, should think he had but to put out his hand, and she in whom every subtle emotion and influence had delicate response, whose words and ways were as far removed from his as day from night, would fly to him, brought the flush of indignation to her cheek. But she responded to his toast with a pleasant nod and said:

"But if you will keep coming in such wild storms, there will not be many anniversaries."

She laughed, and poured out another glass of liqueur for him.

"Well, now, p'raps you're right, and so the only thing to do is not to keep coming, but to stay, stay right where *you* are."

The Indian woman could not see her daughter's face, which was turned to the fire, but she herself smiled at John Alloway and nodded her head approvingly. Here was the cure for her own trouble and loneliness. Pauline and she, who lived in different worlds, and yet were tied to each other by circumstances they could not control, would each work out her own destiny after her own nature, since John Alloway had come a-wooing. She would go back on the Warais, and Pauline would remain at the Portage, a white woman with her white man. She would go back to the smoky fires in the huddled lodges; to the venison stew and the snake dance; to the feasts of the Medicine Men, and the long sleeps in the Summer days, and the Winter's tales, and be at rest among her own people; and Pauline would have revenge of the wife of the prancing Reeve, and perhaps the people would forget that her mother was an Indian woman.

With these thoughts flying through her sluggish mind she rose and moved heavily from the room, with a parting look of encouragement at Alloway, as if to say: "A man that is bold is surest."

With her back to the man, Pauline watched her mother leave the room, saw the look she gave Alloway; and when the door was closed she turned and looked Alloway in the eyes.

"How old are you?" she asked suddenly.

He stirred in his seat almost nervously. "Why, fifty, about," he answered with confusion.

"Then you'll be wise not to go looking for anniversaries in blizzards, when they're few at best," she said with a gentle and dangerous smile.

"Fifty—why, I'm as young as most men of thirty," he responded with an uncertain laugh. "I'd have come here to-day if it had been snowing pitchforks and chain-lightning. I made up my mind I would. You saved my life, that's dead sure; and I'd be down among the conies if it wasn't for you and that Piegan pony

of yours—Piegan ponies are wonders in a storm, seem to know their way by instinct. You, too—why, I bin on the plains all my life, and was no better than a baby that day; but you—why, you had Piegan in you, why, yes—"

He stopped short for a moment, checked by the look in her face, then went blindly on.

"And you got Blackfoot in you, too; and you just felt your way through the tornado and over the blind prairie like a bird reaching for the hills. It was as easy to you as picking out a maverick in a bunch of steers to me. But I never could make out what you was doing on the prairie that terrible day. I've thought of it a hundred times. What was you doing, if it aint cheek to ask?"

"I was trying to lose a life," she answered quietly, her eyes dwelling on his face, yet not seeing him; for it all came back to her, the agony which had driven her out into the tempest to be lost evermore.

He laughed. "Well, now, that's good," he said; "that's what they call speaking sarcastic. You was out to save, and not to lose, a life; that was proved to the satisfaction of the court." He paused and chuckled to himself, thinking he had been witty, and continued: "And I was that court, and my judgment was that the debt of that life you saved had to be paid to you within one calendar year, with interest at the usual per cent. for mortgages on good security. That was my judgment, and there's no appeal from it. I am the great Justinian in this case!"

"Did you ever save anybody's life?" she asked, putting the bottle of cordial away, as he filled his glass for the third time.

"Twice certain, and once dividin' the honors," he answered, pleased at the question.

"And did you expect to get any pay, with or without interest?" she asked.

"Me! I never thought of it again. But yes—by gol, I did! One case was funny, as funny as can be. It was Ricky Wharton over on the Muskawat River. I saved his life right enough, and he came to me a year after and said, 'You saved my life; now what are you going to do with

it? I'm stony broke. I owe a hundred dollars, and I wouldn't be owing it if you hadn't saved my life. When you saved it I was five hundred to the good, and I'd have left that much behind me. Now I'm on the rocks, because you insisted on saving my life; and you got to take care of me! I insist!" Well, that knocked me silly, and I took him on—blame me, if I didn't keep Ricky a whole year till he went North looking for gold. Get pay—why, I paid. Saving life has its responsibilities, little gal!"

"You can't save life without running some risk yourself, not as a rule, can you?" she said, shrinking from his familiarity.

"Not as a rule," he replied. "You took on a bit of a risk with me, you and your Piegan pony."

"Oh, I was young," she responded, leaning over the table, and she began drawing on a piece of paper before her. "I could take more risks, I was only eighteen."

"I don't catch on," he rejoined. "If it's eighteen or—"

"Or fifty," she interposed.

"What difference does it make? If you're done for, it's the same at eighteen as fifty, and vicey-versy."

"No, it's not the same," she answered. "You leave so much more that you want to keep when you go at fifty."

"Well, I dunno. I never thought of that."

"There's all that has belonged to you. You've been married, and have children, haven't you?"

He started, frowned, then straightened himself. "I got one girl—she's East with her grandmother," he said jerkily.

"That's what I said; there's more to leave behind at fifty," she replied, a red spot on each cheek. She was not looking at him, but at the face of a man on the paper before her—a young man with abundant hair, a strong chin, and big, eloquent eyes; and all around his face she had drawn the face of a girl many times, and beneath the faces of both she wrote *Manette and Julien*.

The water was getting too deep for John Alloway. He floundered towards the shore. "I'm no good at words," he

said, "no good at argument; but I've got a gift for stories—round the fire of a night, with a pipe and a tin basin of tea; so I'm not going to try and match you. You've had a good education down at Winnipeg. Took every prize, they say, and led the school, though there was plenty of fuss because they let you do it, and let you stay there, being half-Indian. You never heard what was going on outside, I s'pose. It didn't matter, for you won out. Blamed foolishness, trying to draw the line between red and white that way. Of course, it's the women always, always the women, sticking out for all-white or nothing. Down there at Portage they've treated you mean, mean as dirt. The Reeve's wife—well, we'll fix that up all right. I guess John Alloway aint to be bluffed. He knows too much, and they all know he knows enough. When John Alloway, 32 Main Street, with a ranch on the Katanay, says, 'We're coming! Mr. and Mrs. John Alloway is coming,' they'll get out their cards *visite*, I guess."

Pauline's head bent lower, and she seemed laboriously etching lines into the faces before her—Manette and Julien, Julien and Manette, and there came into her eyes the youth and light and gayety of that memory, the days when Julien came of an afternoon and the riverside rang with laughter; the dearest, lightest days she had ever spent.

The man of fifty went on, seeing nothing but a girl over whom he was presently going to throw the lasso of his affection and take her home with him, yielding and glad, a white man, and his half-breed girl—but such a half-breed!

"I seen enough of the way some of them women treated you," he continued, "and I sez to myself 'Her turn next. There's a way out,' I sez, 'and John Alloway pays his debts. When the anniversary comes round, I'll put things right,' I sez to myself. 'She saved my life, and she sha'll have the rest of it, if she'll take it, and will give a receipt in full, and open a new account in the name of John and Pauline Alloway.' Catch it? See—Pauline?"

Slowly she got to her feet, a look in her eyes such as had been in her mother's but a little while before, but a hundred

times intensified, a look that belonged to the flood and flow of generations of Indian life, yet controlled in her by the order and understanding of centuries of white men's lives, the pervasive, dominating power of race.

For an instant she turned her face towards the window. The storm had suddenly ceased, and a glimmer of sunset light was breaking over the distant wastes of snow.

"You want to pay a debt you think you owe," she said, in a strange, lusterless voice, turning to him at last. "Well, you have paid it. You have given me a book to read which I will keep always. And I give you a receipt in full for your debt."

"I don't know about any book," he said dazed. "I want to marry you right away."

"I am sorry, but it is not necessary," she replied suggestively. Her face was very pale now.

"But I want to. It aint a debt. That was only a way of putting it. I want to make you my wife. I got some position, and I can make the West sit up and look at you and be glad."

Suddenly her anger flared out, low and vivid and fierce, but her words were slow and measured.

"There is no reason why I should marry you—not one. You offer me marriage as a prince might give a penny to a beggar. If my mother were not an Indian woman, you would not have taken it all as a matter of course. But my father was a white man, and I am a white man's daughter, and I would rather marry an Indian who would think me the best thing there was in the light of the sun, than marry you. Had I been pure white, you would not have been so sure; you would have asked, not offered. I am not obliged to you. You ought to go to no woman as you came to me. See, the storm has stopped. You will be quite safe going back now. The snow will be deep, perhaps, but it is not far."

She went to the window, got his cap and gloves, and handed them to him. He took them, dumbfounded and overcome.

"Say, I aint done it right, mebbe, but I meant well, and I'd be good to you and proud of you, and I'd love you better

than anything I ever saw," he said shame-facedly, but eagerly and honestly, too.

"Ah, you should have said those last words first," she answered.

"I say them now."

"They come too late; but they would have been too late in any case," she added. "Still, I am glad you said them."

She opened the door for him.

"I made a mistake," he said humbly. "I understand better now. I never had any schoolin'."

"Oh, it isn't that," she answered gently. "Good-by."

Suddenly he turned. "You're right—it couldn't ever be," he said. "You're—you're great. And I owe you my life still!"

For a moment Pauline stood motionless in the middle of the room, her gaze fixed upon the door which had just closed; then, with a wild gesture of misery and despair, she threw herself upon the couch in a passionate outburst of weeping. Sobs shook her from head to foot, and her hands, clenched above her head, twitched convulsively.

Presently the door opened and her mother looked in eagerly. At what she saw her face darkened and hardened for an instant, and then the girl's utter abandonment of grief and agony convinced and conquered her, and some glimmer of the true understanding of the problem which Pauline represented got into her heart, and drove the sullen selfishness from her face and eyes and mind. She came over heavily and, sinking upon her knees, swept an arm around the girl's shoulder. She realized what had happened, and probably this was the first time in her life that she had ever come by instinct to a revelation of her daughter's mind and the logic of inner facts, or the faithful meaning of incidents of their lives.

"You said 'No' to John Alloway," she murmured.

Defiance and protest spoke in the swift gesture of the girl's hands. "You think because he was white that I'd drop into his arms! No—no—no!"

"You did right, little one."

The sobs suddenly stopped, and the girl seemed to listen with all her body.

There was something in her Indian mother's voice she had never heard before—at least, not since she was a little child, and swung in a deer-skin hammock in a tamarack tree by Renton's Lodge, where chiefs met and the West paused to rest in its onward march. Something of the accents of the voice that crooned to her then was in the woman's tones now.

"He offered it like a lump of sugar to a bird—I know. He didn't know that you have great blood—yes, but it is true. My man's grandfather, he was of the blood of the kings of England. My man had the proof. And for a thousand years my people have been chiefs. There is no blood in all the West like yours. My heart was heavy, and dark thoughts came to me, because my man is gone, and the life is not my life, and I am only an Indian woman from the Warais, and my heart goes out there always now. But some great Medicine has been poured into my heart. As I stood at the door and saw you lying there, I called to the Sun: 'O great Spirit,' I said, 'help me to understand, for this girl is bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh, and Evil has come between us.' And the Sun Spirit poured the Medicine into my spirit, and there is no cloud between us now. It has passed away, and I see. Little white one, the white life is the only life, and I will live it with you till a white man comes and gives you a white man's home. But not John Alloway—shall the crow nest with the oriole?"

As the woman spoke in slow, measured voice, full of the cadences of a heart revealing itself, the girl's breath at first seemed to stop, so still she lay; then, as the true understanding of the words came to her, she panted with excitement, her breast heaved, and the blood flushed her face. When the slow voice ceased, and the room became still, she lay quiet for a moment, letting the new thing find secure lodgment in her thought; then suddenly she raised herself and threw her arms round her mother in a passion of affection and relief.

"Lalika! oh, Lalika!" she said tenderly, and kissed her again and again. Not since she was a little girl, long before they left the Warais, had she called

her mother by her Indian name, which her mother and father had humorously taught her to do in those far-off happy days by the beautiful, singing river and the exquisite woods, when, with a bow and arrow, she had ranged, a young Diana who slew only with love.

"'Lalika,' mother, 'Lalika!' It is like the old, old times," she added softly. "Ah, it does not matter now, for you understand."

"I do not understand altogether," murmured the Indian woman gently. "I am not white, and there is a different way of thinking; but I will hold your hand, and we will live the white life together."

Cheek to cheek they saw the darkness come, and after, the silver moon steal up over a frozen world, in which the air bit like steel and braced the heart like wine. Then, at last, before it was nine o'clock, after her custom, the Indian woman went to bed, leaving her daughter brooding peacefully by the fire.

For a long time Pauline sat with hands clasped in her lap, her gaze on the tossing flames, in her heart and mind a new feeling of strength and purpose. The way before her was not clear, she saw no farther than this day, and all that it had brought, yet she was as one that has crossed a direful flood and finds herself on a strange shore in an unknown country, with the twilight about her, yet with so much of danger passed that there was only the thought of the moment's safety round her, the camp-fire to be lit, and the bed to be made under the friendly trees and stars.

For a half-hour she sat so, and then suddenly she raised her head listening, leaning towards the window, through which the moonlight streamed, mingling with the glow from the chimney. She heard her name called without, distinct and strange: "*Pauline! Pauline!*"

Starting up, she ran to the door and opened it. All was silent and cruelly cold. Nothing but the wide plain of snow and the steely air. But as she stood intently listening, the red glow from the fire behind her, again came the cry "*Pauline!*" not far away. Her heart beat hard, and she raised her head and called—why



"Pauline," he said feebly, and fainted in her arms

was it she should call out in a language not her own?—"Qu'appelle? Qu'appelle?"

And once again on the still night air came the trembling appeal, "Pauline!"

"Qu'appelle? Qu'appelle?" she cried, then, with a gasping murmur of understanding and recognition she ran forward in the frozen night towards the sound of the voice. The same intuitive sense which had made her call out in French, without thought or reason, had revealed to her who it was that called—or was it that even in the one word uttered there was the note of a voice always remembered since those days with Manette at Winnipeg?

Not far away from the house, on the way to Portage la Drôme, but a little distance from the road, was a *crevasse*, and towards this she sped, for once before an accident had happened there. Again the voice called as she sped—"Pauline!" and she cried out that she was coming. Presently she stood above the declivity and peered over. Almost immediately below her, a few feet down, was a man lying in the snow. He had strayed from the obliterated road, and had fallen down the *crevasse*, twisting his foot cruelly. Unable to walk, he had crawled several hundred yards in the snow, but his strength had given out, and then he had called to the house, on whose dark windows flickered the flames of the fire, the name of the girl he had come so far to see.

With a cry of joy and pain at once she recognized him now. It was as her heart had said—it was Julien, Manette's brother. In a moment she was beside him, her arm around his shoulder.

"Pauline!" he said feebly and fainted in her arms.

An instant later she was speeding to the house, and rousing her mother and two of the stablemen, she snatched a flask of brandy from a cupboard and hastened back.

An hour later Julien Labrosse lay in the great sitting-room beside the fire, his foot and ankle bandaged, and at ease, his face alight with all that had brought him there. And once again the Indian mother with a sure instinct knew why he

had come, and saw that now her girl would have a white woman's home, and, for her man, one of the race like her father's race, white and conquering.

"I'm sorry to give trouble," Julien said, laughing—he had a trick of laughing lightly; "but I'll be able to get back to the Portage to-morrow."

To this the Indian mother said, however, "To please yourself is a great thing, but to please others is better; and so you will stay here till you can walk back to the Portage, M'sieu' Julien."

"Well, I've never been so comfortable," he said, "never so happy. If you don't mind the trouble!"

The Indian woman nodded pleasantly and found excuse to leave the room for quite a quarter of an hour. But before she went she contrived to place near his elbow one of the scraps of paper on which Pauline had drawn his face with that of Manette. It brought a light of hope and happiness into his eyes and he thrust the paper under the fur robes of the couch.

"What are you doing with your life?" Pauline asked him, as his eyes sought hers a few moments later.

"Oh, I have a big piece of work before me," he answered eagerly, "a great chance—to build a bridge over the St. Lawrence, and I'm only thirty! I've got my start. Then, I've made over the old Seigneurie my father left me, and I'm going to live in it. It will be a fine place, when I've done with it, comfortable and big, with old oak timbers and walls, and deep fireplaces, and carvings done in the time of Louis Quinze, and dark-red velvet curtains for the drawing-room, and skins and furs. Yes, I must have skins and furs like these here." He smoothed the skins with his hand.

"Manette, she will live with you?" Pauline asked.

"Oh, no, her husband wouldn't like that. You see, Manette is to be married. She told me to tell you all about it."

He told her all there was to tell of Manette's courtship, and added that the wedding would take place in the Spring.

"Manette wanted it when the leaves first come out and the birds come back," he said gayly; "and so she's not going to

live with me at the Seigneurie, you see. No, there it is, as fine a house, good enough for a prince, and I shall be there alone, unless—”

His eyes met hers, and he caught the light that was in them, before the eyelids drooped over them and she turned her head to the fire. “But the Spring is two months off yet,” he added.

“The Spring?” she asked, puzzled, yet half afraid to speak.

“Yes, I’m going into my new house when Manette goes into her new house—in the Spring. And I won’t go alone if—”

He caught her eyes again, but she rose hurriedly and said: “You must sleep now. Good-night.” She held out her hand.

“Well, I’ll tell you the rest to-morrow—to-morrow night when it’s quiet like this, and the stars shine,” he answered. “I’m going to have a home of my own like this—ah, *bien sur*, Pauline.”

That night the old Indian mother prayed to the Sun. “O great Spirit,” she said, “I give thanks for the Medicine poured into my heart. Be good to my white child when she goes with her man to the white man’s home far away. O great Spirit, when I return to the lodges of my people, be kind to me, for I shall be lonely; I shall not have my child; I shall not hear my white man’s voice. Give me good Medicine, O Sun and great Father, till my dream tells me that my man comes from over the hills for me once more.”

The Fly-Aways

BY EDWIN WILDMAN

Author of “Wireless,” etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY GORDON GRANT

LLOYD GRAHAM’S gyromotor, the *Electra*, swept across the upper ether of the night like a thing of life. Herr Venig, his chum at the Sorbonne, had kept his promise and was aboard. Muriel and her maid, Mlle. Gautier, completed the party. It was good of Mlle. Gautier to chaperone Muriel. It was good of dear old Venig to keep his word.

“Lloyd,” he had said one day in Paris, “you’re sheer crazy. If you weren’t, you’d stick to your studies, keep off the Boulevards, keep out of the theatres, and keep out of love.”

Of course Venig was wrong. He always was wrong about Lloyd—and that’s why his young friend liked him. The opportunity for argument was never wanting. If Herr Venig had been right he would have been an insufferable bore, at least to Lloyd, who couldn’t tolerate the everlasting truth everlastingly drummed into his ears. As a matter of fact, Lloyd

did stick to his studies—also the boulevards, the cafés, and the theatres, but the latter were incidents—his “thought spheres,” he called them—the laboratory was his workshop, aéronautics his life, though women were not by any means a negligible quantity.

“If you ever get married, Lloyd, I shall die happy or, if I survive it, I shall at least be able to give some attention to my own affairs,” Venig once declared.

“Well,” Lloyd answered—and he well remembered the reply, “if I do take on a wife will you see me through?” for the thought of such a possibility alarmed him more than a flight in one of his new air-birds

“See you through?” Venig replied. “I’ll see you through if it costs me my life—at present it’s practically valueless to me. I might as well be a keeper in a madhouse.”

The gyromotor was lifting rapidly and

the air was growing thinner. Muriel came out of the compartment and sat at Lloyd's side as he watched the pressure of the aéroid, her eyes glowing with excitement.

"Don't go too high, dear," she cautioned.

"I'm in heaven, now," the master of the *Electra* whispered, his hand impulsively pressing hers.

Venig, perturbed and cynical, sat quietly in the corner.

"Well, old chap, how do you like 'seeing me through?'"

Venig shook his head. "Seeing you through—in the clouds, was hardly in my reckoning," he muttered. "Things move in our times, do they not, Miss Hope?"

"Please don't be sorry," Muriel pouted.

"Sorry, dear Miss Muriel, is a word long since banished from my vocabulary. When I met this crazy boy in Paris, five years ago, I had frequent cause to be sorry. He was filled with the wildest dreams that the human mind could conceive. A hundred times I expected to find him in pieces scattered over a housetop or draping a tree or telegraph-pole. But he always came down from his infernal balloons feet first and rushed off to his 'shop,' to drivel over some wilder project."

"I say, Venig, don't you see Muriel is getting sleepy?—let's talk about yourself. How about those devil mechanisms of yours—those aérolights and thermoloids—and the transmuter—"

"We're getting up, Lloyd—better lower a bit," Venig cut in. He was in no mood to talk science to a pair of eloping lovers.

For answer the master of the *Electra* threw open the compressor, getting a big intake of air. The ship sank perceptibly for a moment. Another turn of the electrophoid raised her snout-like bow and she soared like a projectile.

"Crazy—sheer crazy," Venig muttered. "Better bring Mlle. Gautier in here," he added, "the air distribution is better. Let it off, Lloyd; we must be five miles from 'terra cotta'" (one of the professor's stock jokes.)

"Mlle. Gautier's comfort seems to concern the professor," Lloyd whispered. Then aloud: "A Marconiflash explodes at ten miles, dear Venig. The blooming telephotoscope might take us easily at this height. Dear Papa-to-be Hope will have every wireless station from New York to the coast on the watch for us."

"You don't think we'll get in the papers, do you, dear?" Muriel's eyes were eloquent with alarm.

"N-o, sweetheart," Lloyd smiled caressingly, "I don't *think* we shall. I *know* that we shall get in, and get in all over—all over the front pages. We shall not only get in but we are already in." He grinned over his shoulder. "Dare you trust a wireless, Venig?"

The scientist shook his head at the utter absurdity of the question.

"Well, it isn't necessary to send one, dearest. My thought-plane is working, professor," with a malicious twinkle in his eye toward Herr Venig. "Here's what the midnight 'extra' of the *MarcoScope Journal* is saying: 'Elopement in the Clouds!' eh, Venig? 'Muriel Hope, youngest daughter of John De Vetter Hope, the Trillionaire President of the World Wireless Company, sails away with Lloyd Graham in his three-hundred-miles-an-hour gyromotor, the *Electra*. Marconi-flashes have been sent from every station this side of the Mississippi and south as far as Mobile. The *MarcoScope* telephotograph is scouring the sky for a picture of the *Electra*. She is thought to be sailing toward the Arctic. There are no stations beyond 70° north latitude—'

Lloyd's words suddenly ceased. He sprang from his seat and thrust over a short lever projecting from a porcelain switch-board. A lurid green blazed like the eyes of a demon in front of the huge glass ovals that formed the eyes of the *Electra*. A counter flash of violet struck the air like a bolt of lightning and dissipated the glare into a hue that was not unlike the light of dawn.

Coincidentally the ship leaped forward like a fawn, the swerve forcing Muriel and Herr Venig from their seats.

"'Papa' nearly caught us that time, dear," Lloyd smiled as he gathered Mu-



"They're signaling," Venig murmured.

riel in his arms and helped her back as the ship righted itself.

"The inertia was a little too strong for the air distribution," he remarked.

The gyromotor steadied and the *Electra* lifted swiftly.

"We're out of range now," Lloyd announced merrily. "The Marconiflash was about spent—or I couldn't have seen it. They can't reach us now. The *Journal* will have to eat its words or 'fake' a telescoposcope in the morning."

Herr Venig's face grew serious. "We can't keep at this height forever," he frowned, "Ordinarily such speed would be amusing, on a lower stratum, but at the rate you are going and at this altitude I see no prospect of arriving anywhere."

"What do you propose, dear professor?" Lloyd questioned.

"You might make peace with your hoped for"—another form of the profes-

sor's wit—"father-in-law by wireless."

"Good thought, Herr Venig; what do you say, Muriel?"

A very doubtful nod was her only answer.

"We can't live on protoids forever, that's certain," Venig growled.

"We might drop in on Mars," Lloyd suggested laughingly.

"Crazy, sheer crazy—you have my sympathy, Miss Hope." Venig dropped back on the air-cushions hopelessly.

The *Electra* was whizzing through the upper ether of the earth's radiation at a fearful pace. As they ascended, the rarefied air lessened the friction, the aërometer registered 30,000 feet, 10,000 feet higher than the topmost peak of Mt. McKinley. The pressure was normal and the electrolyers kept the temperature at 70°.

The white and pink face of the little

heiress was nestled closely to the strong form of the young aéronaut. Her faith was so implicit in his prowess that there was no note of alarm in her countenance.

Lloyd Graham was a valuable man—a most valuable man, was the way Muriel's father had put it—but marry? Egad, he'd as soon put his daughter in her grave at once as to give her to such a lunatic. To emphasize his decision he had forbidden the aéronaut his house. The interposition of Mlle. Gautier had defeated the intent if not the letter of his command. Through her the lovers had communicated. But the enforced separation had only precipitated matters. Graham was not given to counting consequences. In life he was not less "crazy," as Venig had said, than in aéronautics.

"If John de Vetter Hope controls the earth's air-waves, I am master of the skylines," he told Venig. "He may pursue me with his aérogrames and telephotoscopes only so far. Beyond that radius I am king."

Herr Venig's smile, that cynical, amused smirk of his, as Lloyd characterized it, was the chemist's only reply to the young enthusiast's declaration of sovereignty of the solar system beyond the earth's air boundaries.

"Of course, it makes no difference to you that we have not entirely mastered interplanetary communication," Venig remarked after a time.

"But there a few spots on this globe below that are not covered by wireless receiving-stations," Lloyd retorted.

"I would be interested in knowing where they are," Venig replied.

"Well, Hyndman, Cerro Blanco, Mt. Hood, Rainier, and several others offer good diffusion-zones to isolate radio-poids."

"But the wave-aéra can't be controlled long; any passing aéromotor can sight us."

"Not if we destroy the alternations—"

"Oh, well, as you wish, I'm not up on your theories."

"Only up with them," Lloyd smiled.

"Miss Muriel and Mlle. Gautier cannot live on air, anyway, to say nothing of myself."

"But I have a stock of thermoid food

aboard. Barring accident, there is no reason why we should land for at least a month."

"And after that?"

"We'll bring 'Papa' Hope to terms; you yourself have suggested the means."

"How?"

"Through that little transmuter of yours."

"It strikes me 'Papa' Hope may object to being 'held down' in this fashion. Suppose he refuses to negotiate terms by aérogram? It looks like clubbing him with his own tools of defense."

"Then we will go to Thibet or the Urals, or, for that matter, to Guam, or some other remote spot and—"

"Live the rest of our lives. Of course, I am not to be considered in the matter. I can spend the rest of my days on Wake Island, with the sea-gulls, or in Fiji; that is a matter of no moment."

Muriel's merry laugh broke in.

"Oh, Herr Professor—don't be absurd. Of course, papa will relent when he sees we really mean to—really love each other—"

"Of course," Lloyd joined in, blushing as profusely as the girl at his side.

Herr Venig shrugged his shoulders hopelessly, then arose and scanned the altometer.

"Let's see, we are ten miles up—where's your chart?"

Graham took down an aluminum cylinder from the side of the compartment.

"Solar or terrestrial?"

"Well, I think a station-chart would be more to the point. That transmuter of mine wont carry more than three thousand miles."

"All right," Lloyd assented cheerfully, adding to the wide-eyed girl at his side, "You'd better run to bed, dearest. If you and Mlle. Gautier don't catch a little sleep we'll have to wire for a doctor in the morning—*pardon me, professor.*"

Lloyd pressed his lips to the girl's as she slipped from his side.

"Please, dear, tell papa we are sorry and—very happy, too," she smiled joyously. "Good-night, dear; good-night, Herr Professor," she added with demure courtesy.

"This is a big joke with you, Lloyd,"

Venig growled, when the women were gone. "I'm not thinking of my own life, but there are a hundred things that might happen—a disturbance on Mars, an electric-storm on Jupiter, an asteroid in our path, to say nothing of a million things that might cripple the gyroscope or other parts of the electrolosis."

"Sounds like one of your curtain-talks of the Rue de La Ford, old boy. Get it off your mind; nothing can happen to the ship. At the worst we would only sink slowly to earth. One would think you were living back in 1908."

"Lloyd, you know you are not married to the young lady, yet; Madame Grundy hasn't changed her viewpoint" in these matters since 1908."

"That's what I am thinking of; that's the reason I had to come up here," was the reply. "You don't think I prefer getting her this way to walking into St. Luke's and saying, 'I will,' do you? J. De Vetter Hope simply wouldn't listen to me—would not accept yours truly for a son-in-law; so I'm obliged to take him as a papa-in-law, willy-nilly. Now, get out that box of yours and let's wake him up."

Grasping the lever of the electrophoid the aéronaut stopped the alternators. The *Electra* glided gently downward. Lloyd regulated the aérometers and let out the *Electra's* magno-meter kites.

"We might as well fill up the batteries," he commented.

Venig watched his young friend as he put his wireless apparatus in order. He admired the nervy, wiry, human mechanism before him, sitting so confidently astride the controller-seat, every muscle taut, every nerve alert, every chord of his anatomy in perfect unison, the master of this marvelous air-craft that could annihilate space, atmospheric conditions, and almost defy the physical needs of its passengers.

"It's a wonder he has a human heart in his bosom," he ruminated. "The man of the future—to what extremes will he go, and what effect will this gradual mastery of material and solar conditions have upon the races to come?"

His fingers were idle. His thoughts soared—soared far beyond the confines of the winged wonder that was plunging

through space, contradicting all preconceived notions of man's limitations. Venig was a chemist whose mind concerned itself with the analysis of things as they existed. He walked the earth and had to do with the materials thereof. To him aéronautics were yet in the field of the marvelous; they were not of his realm of speculation. He was a fish out of water. He resented it. A sigh escaped his lips.

"Dreaming, old man?"

Lloyd's voice aroused him.

"I've brought her over Rotan. The air is clear here. We can talk with 'papa.' If he gets funny, we'll jump over the Andes."

Lloyd fastened the lever down, crossed the compartment, and listened a moment at the door of the inner room.

"Will it disturb them—your infernal machine?"

"No, the transmuter scatters at a thousand feet below."

"All right, shoot ahead."

"'John de Vetter Hope, World's Wireless, Central, New York'—get that?"

Venig's fingers were playing on the termetor.

"Make it brief. I haven't much radium and we may need it badly—what next?"

"Muriel and Lloyd ask your forgiveness—refuse and we go to Mars—"

The words fell staccato-like from Lloyd's lips.

Venig's hand stopped.

"Go on, I say," Lloyd's eyes glistened.

"Sign it, 'Lloyd and Muriel—in the sky,' "

The professor obeyed, but when he locked the key there was a look of reproof on his face.

"Can't you be sane about anything?"

"The old man will believe it."

Venig made no answer. He opened the receiver and picked up the chart.

"You may be a fool if you want to, Lloyd, but you will be a fool—alone. You may land Miss Hope and Mlle. Gautier and myself at the nearest aéro-station. We will return by the first ship to New York."

Lloyd reached for the electrophoid controller. Under his swift touch the *Electra* glided suddenly forward, dropping rapidly.

"What are you doing?"

"Going to land you."

"And the women—"

"No."

Venig sighed.

"All right—I give up—stop the thing—I'll see you through."

The gyromotor slowed down, and stopped and rolled gently, like a liner at sea. The tense, almost demoniac flash that crossed Lloyd's face gave way to a caressing smile.

"I thought you were going back on me."

"Forgive me, old man, I always do give in, you know."

Weird phosphorescent glows were struggling in the deep spaces below. The lower eye-plate was lifted and the two men peered through the ether.

"They're signaling," Venig murmured.

"They can't reach us."

Lloyd lowered. The *Electra* sank rapidly.

Presently the receiver-bells jingled. Venig swung in the magneto-accumulator.

B-e b-l-a-m-e-d i-f I d-o. G-o M-a-r-s.
J. D-e V-e-t-t-e-r H-o-p-e.

"I told you—" Venig checked himself. "It's no use, you see."

Lloyd's face was serious for the first time. He dropped back on the cushion, glancing furtively toward the door of the inner compartment.

"I wouldn't care—for myself. You know that. But Muriel!"

"Madame Grundy can't say an awful lot, with Mlle. Gautier and yourself aboard."

Lloyd jumped up. His face cleared.

"Wire the old man we haven't forgotten the proprieties. Ask him to jump into an aero-ship and meet us at Dorania."

"What then?"

"And give us his blessing, of course."

"No harm trying," Venig murmured.

Flinging back the check-key his fingers played on the instrument. Below in the blackness of night the aeronauts could see the radium-flashes glisten like fireflies from the point of the pendulum-wire, then disappear as quickly into the depths.

For a long time they were silent. The tiny aluminum mechanism gave no re-

sponse to the spirit-words they hurled through æons of space.

The gyromotor swung in the air like a bird at rest on its flight across an expanse of sea. Lloyd dozed off for a time as Herr Venig kept vigil. After a while he awoke, rubbed his eyes, and peered down through the eye of his air-bird, as if he might espy a vagrant aérogram struggling up through the deeps of darkness.

In turn Venig caught forty winks as Lloyd watched the transmuter for some sign from the far off earth. Gradually the world-ball veered from its eclipse and the dawn rays crept closer, until the white lights of the sun drove somber hues from its path. Its rays glistened like the gleam of stalactites shooting up from the black depths—a glorified aurora borealis. The vast stillness of limitless space was only broken by the never ending whirr of the swift gyromotor vibrating on the ship's keel, propelled by the irresistible force of subordinated earth gravity, drawn in from magneto-meter aeroplanes.

"The old man is irreconcilable. I might have known it."

"What's that?" Venig mumbled, awakening.

"The answer to our protocol is—"

As if mental telepathy were at work, the transmuter suddenly responded.

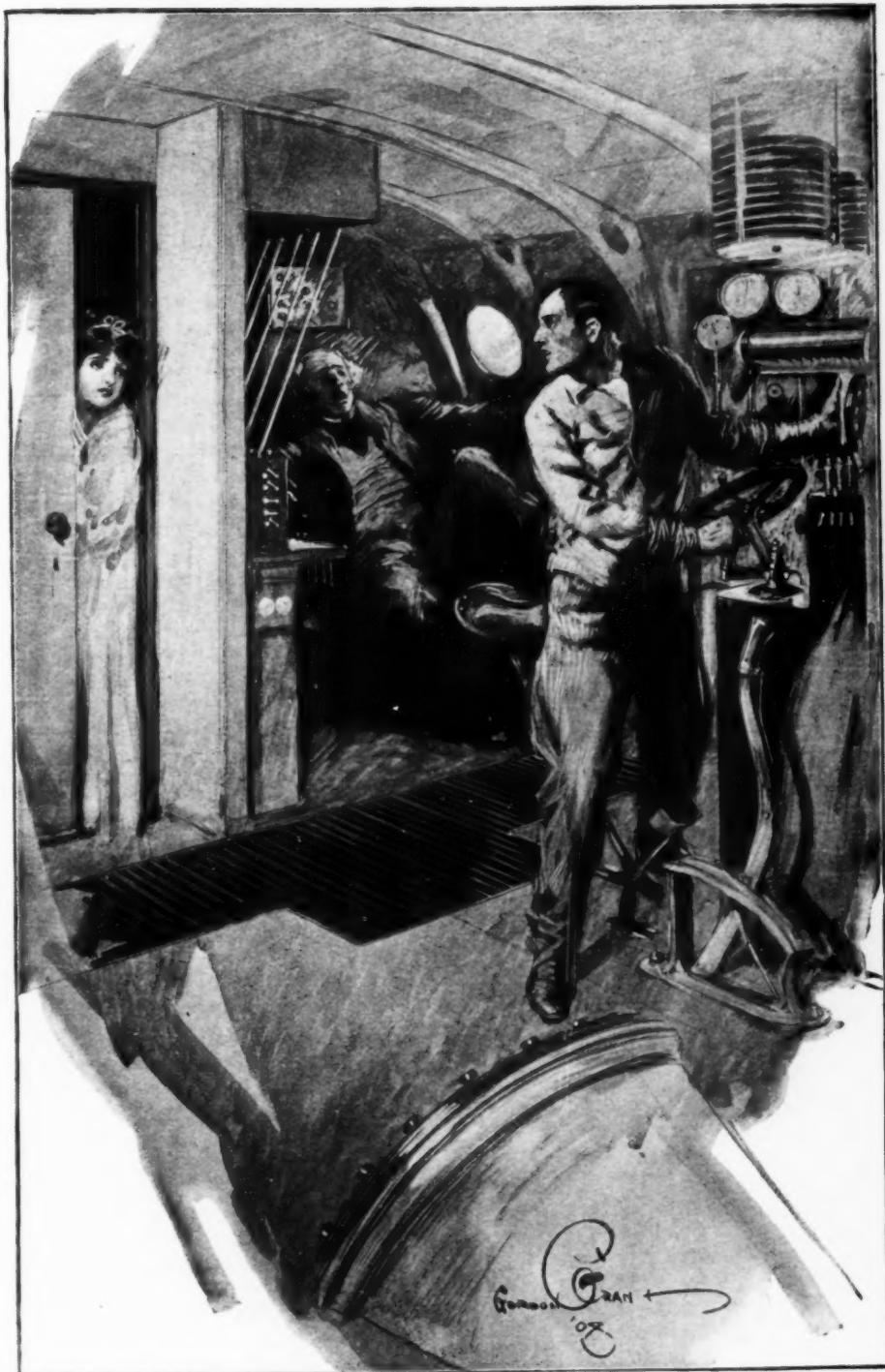
A m-i-l-l-i-o-n d-o-l-l-a-r-s r-e-w-a-r-d. A-l-l a-i-r-s-t-a-t-i-o-n-s a-n-d a-i-r-s-h-i-p-s t-a-k-e n-o-t-i-c-e. T-h-e m-o-n-e-y w-i-l-l b-e p-a-i-d f-o-r t-h-e s-a-f-e c-a-p-t-u-r-e a-n-d r-e-t-u-r-n o-f m-y d-a-u-g-h-t-e-r k-i-d-n-a-p-e-d b-y L-l-o-y-d G-r-a-h-a-m a-n-d n-o-w w-i-t-h h-i-m a-n-d h-i-s f-r-i-e-n-d-s i-n h-i-s g-y-r-o-m-o-t-o-r t-h-e E-l-e-c-t-r-a. (S-i-g-n-e-d) J. D-e V-e-t-t-e-r H-o-p-e.

Over went the controller. The *Electra* leaped into the air. The force of the shock was so great that the current screeched a terrifying blast. The vacuums in the wake of the flying ship filled with sharp explosions. The sound was like artillery fire.

Muriel's frightened eyes peered out of the compartment.

"It's all right, dearest, don't be frightened."

Lloyd's assurance was all satisfying. The fawn eyes smiled and disappeared.



"Don't be frightened, dearest: it's all right"

"What are you doing?" Venig demanded, gathering himself together.

"We must have dropped into the normal wireless zone in the night. That message was not intended to reach us," Lloyd replied, holding back the glistening bar to its limit as the *Electra* sped upward.

Venig clapped down the lid of the port-hole, locked it, and peered through the bulging glass at Lloyd's right.

For an hour he sat fascinated by the very speed of the ship. She careened through the heights like a meteor. Now

and then the collapse of a vacuum, far in her trail, exploded like distant thunder. The great convex shell of the earth lay below; monstrous, it seemed, in its immensity. Dim outlines of huge mountains, and long, shimmering, snake-like rivers, gleamed in the reflected light. Black spots marked the sites of dense cities, and broad flat ovals indicated great plains. Dark serrated fissures, not unlike Martian canals, delineated deep valleys, but even through the powerful electroscope it was impossible, without the aid of the aéro-compass, to make out where they were.

The navigator at the controller turned the course of the ship from the west straight east. His face was tense and his wire-like fingers moved from one piece of mechanism to another with electric swiftness.

Concerned alone with the ship's flight and its course, Lloyd gave no heed to his companion, to physical things, or to the terrifying possibilities in the balance.

Only now and then he turned his eyes toward the little compartment, as the sound of Muriel's voice rang out cheerily. To her, born in an era when air-ships had ceased to be experimental, when they had been removed from the sphere of danger, it was



Over on the cushions the young lovers sat

no novelty to "fly." To her accustomed mind such a trip was a "lark." That the *Electra* had ventured beyond the spheres of aerial exploration was not a matter that concerned her in the least. The daughter of the President of the World's Wireless Company had been reared in an atmosphere of what, to her grandsires, would have been sheer magic.

Lloyd was a Young Lochinvar of his time and period. To have borne her away on a white steed would have been a matter of more concern to the captured maidens than her present flight across the zones of air thousands of feet above the earth.

"I promised to see him through," murmured Venig, at last, when his imagination had run the whole gamut of conjectures, "and see him through I will."

"Lloyd, where are you heading for?" he asked, finally, for the mind of Herr Venig was gradually evolving an idea.

"Mars," the aéronaut snapped. "We can do it, old man."

Venig looked at the master of the *Electra* curiously.

"I wonder—" he said, then checked himself, continuing his thoughts inaudibly. "I have known men's minds to be affected at great depths—perhaps—no, the boy is just *fool* crazy, that's all, not really so."

Aloud he said, "Do you mind lowering a bit, Lloyd, and swinging over to France?"

The aéronaut looked around quickly.

"You want to get us caught; you're weakening."

"No, Lloyd, I've an—I want to send a message to an old friend of mine in Paris, in the Rue de la Ford."

"A million is a lot of money, Venig!"

"The thought is unworthy of you, Lloyd."

"Forgive me, old chum. That girl is worth more to me than all of Hope's trillions. I intend to keep her now—if I never see earth again."

"You shall keep her, Lloyd, and I'll help you."

The strong right hand of the aéronaut clasped the hand of the chemist.

"I believe you," he said simply.

"We shall reach the Paris zone by

eleven o'clock. Can you get into communication—say off the Antilles?"

"Yes, easily. That will just make my plan feasible—"

"Your plan?"

"Yes, to catch my friend before he goes to luncheon; he was a pupil of mine. Went crazy—pardon, Lloyd—on wireless, and now has the Eiffel tower station. I want to give a message to—"

Venig carried the subject no further.

"Can't you set that wheel and let us call the young ladies and have a bite to eat? I'm starved."

Lloyd manipulated the controller, slid off his seat, and stretched himself.

The little party lunched. The repast was simple but sustaining. Dainty tabloids, protoids, and vacuum-kept foods from the thermostat were quickly placed upon a table that slipped from an aperture in the ship's side. Muriel and Mlle. Gautier arranged the feast with keen pleasure.

"Your wedding-breakfast," Herr Venig remarked gayly. His spirits were buoyant now and his keen eyes gleamed with mystery.

"We shall have to act as sponsors, Mlle. Gautier," he added.

At eleven o'clock sharp, Paris time, Lloyd brought the *Electra* to slow speed.

Herr Venig threw open the transmuter and signaled.

Almost instantly the bells of his instrument replied. The chemist laughed merrily.

"De Ville, of the Eiffel, wants to know where we are."

Again his fingers played on the transmuter.

"Do you mind waiting here half an hour, Lloyd?"

"No, but watch out—keep the receiver open—they will all be hunting for us."

Over on the cushions the young lovers sat.

"If only it were our wedding-breakfast," Lloyd murmured.

"But we'll pretend that it is," Muriel smiled, sweetly content. "Why not go down anyway, dearest," she continued. "Papa couldn't prevent us from being married—here."

"Every human being on the civilized earth knows about our—eloement now, dear, and no one is so romantic as to throw away a million dollars reward. We'd both simply be arrested and your father would keep you away from me, if it took a hundred millions—no, dear, never, I'll try Mars first."

"It's all right, Lloyd," Venig was calling as happily as a child with a new toy.

"Come right here, you and Muriel—here, crazy boy—take this ring. It shall be your wedding-ring until you get a real one. Mlle. Gautier, you shall be bridesmaid."

"Are you insane, professor?"

Lloyd's face was a puzzle.

"Almost; this is so good. It will give the *Marconi Journal* a sensation that will turn it even yellower than it is. Listen now; De Ville, at the Eiffel, has the Rev. Dr. Frank B. Coddington, rector of Trinity, Paris, at the other end of the wireless—"

"Oh!" gasped Muriel.

"What the—" ejaculated Lloyd.

"So verra clevar—he marry you," Mlle. Gautier clapped her hands.

"S-h-h." Venig's face grew serious.

"Dr. Coddington has already read the ceremony. I wired De Ville the whole story in our old private code. I am master now, S-h-h. The minister is talking, ing."

"M-u-r-i-e-l d-o y-o-u t-a-k-e L-l-o-y-d t-o b-e y-o-u-r w-e-d-d-e-d* h-u-s-b-a-n-d?"

Venig's voice was as solemn as if he were the rector of Trinity himself. Under his fingers he held the key of the instrument, looking gravely at the two young people, half-frightened, yet beaming with joy.

"Oh, is it really so, dear professor?" Muriel cried.

"Yes, answer, please, quick—some one may get in on our circuit."

"I do," the girl's voice was low and earnest.

The transmuter worked rapidly. The receiver echoed back a message:

"L-l-o-y-d d-o y-o-u t-a-k-e M-u-r-i-e-l t-o b-e y-o-u-r w-e-d-d-e-d w-i-f-e?"

Venig's voice was sepulchral.

"I do," Lloyd responded solemnly.

"Wait," the professor commanded with authority, as his finger tapped the key.

"Oh, it is beautiful," the little French maid cried, tears springing into her eyes.

A moment of silence, then as the instrument clicked, Venig read the message:

"T-h-e-n I p-r-o-n-o-u-n-c-e y-o-u m-a-n a-n-d w-i-f-e a-n-d w-h-a-t G-o-d h-a-t-h j-o-i-n-e-d t-o-g-e-t-h-e-r l-e-t n-o m-a-n p-u-t a-s-u-n-d-e-r."

The professor's hand worked rapidly, then suddenly dropped from the keyboard.

A counter current entered the wave area, a thousand times more powerful than the little radium alternator in the *Electra*.

Venig's race was troubled. He tried the key again but it gave no response. The magneto-needle quivered as the powerful bolt shot through the wave-belt, and the transmuter at his side pounded fiercely:

"I f-o-r-b-i-d t-h-e m-a-r-r-i-a-g-e—"

The chemist translated the interloping words slowly.

"We are caught. Your father has intercepted our messages, Mrs. Graham," Venig added, a twinkle in his eye. "But not the ceremony. He is just a milo-second too late—"

It was on the 24th of June, 1950, that Paris and all the world was treated to its first sensation of a marriage made in the heavens, but not in the good old-fashioned way. It was none the less real, however, for the law had long since recognized the wireless, and in spite of the first outburst of threats from the President of the World's Wireless Company of New York, a bolt crossed the Atlantic that brought forgiveness and blessings to the fly-aways.

Jerry

BY MRS. JACQUES FUTRELLE

ILLUSTRATED BY HENRY RALEIGH

I

THE Manager of the MacNutt Opera Company sat upon an inverted bucket in a darkened corner of the stage and held his head. Once he had had an ambition; it was to be the greatest *impresario* the country ever knew. Now ambition dwindled until it was merely an uncontrolled longing for a ham-sandwich.

Hope had fled; at least she was just flirting her airy skirts around the corner, going fast. He listened, with an eyebrow cocked and his mouth quizzically aslant, to the rain booming on the roof. It was the last straw. It meant no house, consequently no money, no railroad-fares, no next town. There wouldn't have been *this* town if a soft-hearted railroad official hadn't brought the company on with the prospect of a good week ahead. The "good week ahead" had resolved itself into nineteen dollars in real money—not a third enough for the official—and the rain-storm.

It didn't matter so much for MacNutt. He could turn scrub-lady or shift scenes or slap signs on a fence, or punch a policeman and land his dinner; but there were others depending upon him.

The men didn't matter so much either. They could turn scrub-lady, too, *et cetera, et cetera*. But the girls, all of them pretty and pitifully helpless, and not one capable of being more than a mediocre member of the chorus! He watched them come in by twos and threes looking for the bucket to drip the umbrellas in, and finally leaving them in a dejected, bedraggled state along the wall.

The MacNutt Opera Company had long ago dispensed with its leading lady, its substitute L.L., its adored tenor, its sub-cellular *basso*, and the best part of its

splendid chorus. Then it began to dispense with wigs and costumes, and the fifteen operas, in *repertoire*, dwindled to five. Finally an obliging sheriff brought the number down to "Boccacio," the one they were playing when he appeared. Hotel trunks had fallen by the wayside, and hotels were dispensed with as a useless and expensive luxury. Then the remnant of the MacNutt's began sleeping in waiting-rooms until the next train out, catching a meal here and there when anything was left over from railroad-fares. To get home was impossible. He didn't even see railroad-fares now. The company hadn't had a square meal for a month, and he had made all sorts of vain promises to the landlady of an extremely shabby rooming-house.

His gloomy meditations were interrupted by the entrance of a slim, girlish figure, and a stout, womanly one. The stout woman unlocked the door to what was known as the star dressing-room and disappeared inside. The locking was a matter of habit. There wasn't anything there but a suit-case, a make-up box, and one costume.

MacNutt arose from the bucket, kicked it meditatively in the direction of the umbrellas, and after slowly, thoughtfully, placing them in it one by one, he knocked upon the door of the dressing-room and entered. The stout woman was Geraldine Baker, the backbone of the MacNutt's.

"Pretty bad storm, Jerry?" he queried.

"Pretty bad?" Jerry snapped. "Aw, quit your kiddin', Mac. The flood wasn't a marker. It's the end of the rope, the sum total, the finish. Mac, we've weighed luck in the balance and there ain't no balance. It's so bad it's almost funny. We're simply down and out at last. Aint we?"

"Well, something like that," Mac admitted ruefully.

"Aw," she flared, "if you don't know when you're beaten, I do. You make me laugh, hanging on by your teeth when you've been knocked sky-western crooked."

She kicked two shabby, run-down, soaking shoes into a corner and pulled her chair near the radiator. He looked at her squarely, but he really didn't

see her for he was thinking. And, anyway, she wasn't much to look at. She had a pudgy face, a small nose, impertinently tilted, a large mouth, a very large mouth and an aggressive, determined chin. Her skin was coarse and her hair a mop of straw-colored stuff. It had been curled and crimped until now, with the wind-blown, wet ends hanging about her face, it looked like a neglected doormat. Still, she tried to look like Lillian

Russell, and she knew the opera-business from "a" to "izzard."

When the leading lady and the substitute L.L. washed their dainty fingers of the MacNutt Opera Company, she waded valiantly into the leads to help Mac out of the hole, and had succeeded ever since in making an A flat sound like high C to the uninitiated. She bluffed through what she didn't know about singing and used all the old tricks of "handing" things to an audience. She had turned stage-manager, too, when that necessary personage left the MacNutt's for a circus, and had transformed the chorus-people into shining lights, nagging, working like a fiend and taunting them into really creditable efforts. But it was no use. They had landed at last with a good, sound bump.

"We're not so awfully rotten," she remarked, finally, "even if we are left-



The manager sat upon an inverted bucket

overs. It's just luck's against us and we're out of heart. A man can't be funny when his stomach's empty, and he don't see a bed once a month. Life's a joke when you're making fun of Life, but when Life's making fun of you, that's another matter. Aw, what's the use?"

Mac stroked his lean face and meditated.

"If we could get on just *once* more I can see light ahead," he ventured.

"Of course you can, Mac. You're the champion long-distance looker when it comes to that light-ahead bunk. But I've lost faith in the light-ahead, and the silver-lining, and the long-lane. I've thrown my hand in the discard and I'm not asking for a new deal. It's quits for me. I'm going to start out to-morrow to find somebody who wants a cook."

He tried to control the twitch to his mouth and stroked the lean chin harder in consequence.

"I'm sorry, Jerry," he murmured, "I'm sorry, but I'd hoped you wouldn't leave, too."

She pushed back her chair and stared at him.

"Leave?" she repeated. "You don't mean to tell me you're still going to try? Why, man, you're down and out!"

He swung his legs and didn't answer.

"You even owe the fares here," she went on.

"Except nineteen dollars."

"Nineteen—pooh! As well be nineteen stray cats so far as we are concerned. And the old lady, Mac, she's poor. She can't afford to lose that room-rent."

He turned his hands outward. "I'm sorry," he said again. "I know I'm a thief and a liar, but if we could get to Habersham—it's county-fair week, and I tell you I see light ahead. We're booked for the week, and I managed to get out great paper there; just the kind to catch the eye and I see a chance. There'll be crowds there—show crowds. A college something or other of some sort is meeting there, too. Why, Jerry—"

"Been that way all along, Mac," she interrupted, "hoping, hoping. But we can't get there—so!"

"If we could," he persisted, "and it's such good paper."

"We can't get there," she repeated doggedly.

"Why, hang it, Jerry, I've got to," he burst out suddenly. "I've got to! I've got a company depending upon me and I've got to land 'em back home. It may be all right for you and me to be turned adrift—we can fight! But it won't do for the girls—it won't do. They're honest now—they wouldn't be here if they weren't—but they can't do anything else, and I wouldn't give two straws—I've got to," he finished desperately.

Jerry hung her head thoughtfully.

"That old—old fool who has been chasing Bunnie around was at her heels again to-night. He was waiting on the steps as we came out. He escorted us to the theatre, but I had the pleasure of putting my dripping umbrella in the middle of that immaculate shirt-front when he tried to come inside. Mac, have you tried him?"

Mac sighed.

"Yes, I've tried him," he replied. He turned his hands outward again and shook his head. "Nothing doing, Jerry. He had a roll of money big enough to choke a horse but—"

Jerry curled her lip and finally burst into a laugh.

"The old fool," she remarked. "Why Bunnie despises the sight of him. He ain't got no more chance than the snowball you've heard about."

"I'm not going to risk it, Jerry. I'm going to get to the next town." He rubbed his face and ran his long fingers through his hair. "Jerry," he remarked suddenly, "you can help us—if you will."

She came to her feet, overturning the chair, and glared at him.

"Mac, you're thinking of my ring, but *not on your tintype!*" She held out her right hand. "No, I ain't wearing it but I've got it and I'm going to keep it! You know—every one of you—how I feel about it. I've gone hungry and grimy and barefooted nearly; I've set up night after night wild for sleep, but I've kept my ring. Why, Mac, I'd scrub this town on my knees before I'd part with it. You make me froth at the mouth to suggest such a thing."

Mac looked at her for a long while,



"Why, Mac, I'd scrub this town on my knees before I'd part with it"

then went toward the door and dropped his hand upon the knob.

"Forget it, Jerry," he said at last, gently.

"Of course you think I'm nutty about it, but it's a long story, as the heroine says in the third act. Mac, that ring was my grandmother's and Pa gave it to my mother for her engagement-ring. We were down to cases more times than once, I can tell you—after we had to scramble for ourselves—but Ma always held on to that ring. It was a religion with us; the one thing we had to remind us that once we was *folks!* It aint never been out of our family, and it never *will!* When she was dying she gave it to me and said—aw, I am nutty, I guess, but I wouldn't hock it if I was dying in a gutter—so there!"

"It's about time I was out front," Mac remarked inconsequently, and disappeared.

Jerry put on a kimono that had once

been *Yum Yum's* and began jerking the pins from her hair. At the end of half an hour she stalked out of the dressing-room and hailed the musical director as he crossed the stage.

"Here you, Billy! Kick some life into that orchestra to-night. I don't want to wail through this again."

"I'll try, Jerry," he answered half-heartedly.

She walked to the curtain and looked out, then turned back again in a rage. She wanted to choke Mac for even hoping. How could they expect to make good with no scenery, no wigs and costumes, and the same opera night after night for a week in a one-night stand? She stumbled over Bunnie in the wings.

"Anybody out there?" Bunnie asked tentatively.

"Yep, our regular audience. He's on the end, three rows back."

Bunnie dropped upon a stool and looked at her out of two gorgeous eyes.

Jerry didn't wonder somebody had gone crazy over her.

"Isn't it awful, Jerry? I think if we could change the opera somebody would come."

Jerry snorted.

"I wish we could play something besides 'Boccaccio,' don't you?" Bunnie ventured.

"Wish it? Of course I don't wish it. It would just tickle me to death to prance around for the rest of my days in these red tights! It's a hateful, immoral old thing, anyhow. Bunnie, take it from me, there's nothing in this poor old world worth anything unless it's *good*. Do you understand that?"

Bunnie looked at her and laughed.

Jerry leaned against a wing for a long time, while the sound of the orchestra tuning set the figures moving to and fro from the dressing-rooms.

"Do you know that Mac's completely busted—down and out?" she asked Bunnie suddenly.

"Really?"

"Absolutely. We break up to-night. We've all got to get out and hustle for ourselves. Mac can scramble back to New York, and I'm like a cat: I always land on my feet. The men ought to be digging ditches anyhow, and Sam will have Broadway dippy about him in another two years with that face and figger, even if he don't ever learn to act—but you, Bunnie, I don't want you to let that—"

"Jerry!" The girl dropped her head upon her arm for an instant and Jerry wondered if she were going to cry.

"Don't do it, girlie," she advised; "it'll spoil your make-up."

"But next week?" Bunnie asked steadily after a time. "Mac says it's a chance—a big chance. He can pull us all out of the hole. He hopes—"

"Yes, you can bet on Mac hoping." Jerry cut in; "but he can't get there, I tell you."

Bunnie didn't answer but she sat thinking, and when Jerry had gone away to call the first act, she wandered toward the stage-entrance and paced back and forth there for a while. Just before the curtain went up she held a whispered conversation with a stage-hand, and after

the first act a casual, a very casual one with Mac, who was standing in the wings. She merely asked him how much the fares would be to Habersham. Three minutes later she was in Jerry's dressing-room.

"Jerry," she demanded, "has Mac thought of your ring?"

"Mac thinks of everything, you bet," Jerry snapped. "But Bunnie, *my ring don't figger!* My ring is mine, *mine, MINE* and I'm going to *keep* it! Oh!" —she banged the shelf with her clenched hands to express herself—"you know about *me* and that *ring*! And don't, don't make me mad or I'll never grin through that second act. I don't like it anyhow. I hate that lover in the barrel. I don't think it's *funny*. Oh! How—how dare you?"

Bunnie looked at her dully, then turned and jerked frantically at the door.

"What are you going to do?" Jerry asked, suspiciously.

"I don't know, but Mac's going to have that money somehow—that's all!"

The exit was magnificent. She couldn't have made Bunnie do it in a thousand years on the stage. She wanted to applaud, but she was on her feet in an instant.

She found Bunnie after a time in a secluded corner of the stage scribbling a note. She crumpled the paper in her hand when Jerry suddenly appeared, but Jerry didn't have to be told what was written—she knew.

"Now, see here, Bunnie, you're not going to do anything foolish," she said. "We—"

"Jerry how—how dare you!" The tone was taunting, mocking. She looked at Jerry squarely. "I can take care of myself," she finished coldly.

"You are so mule-headed, Bunnie, you can swing around just as hard the other way. Now here, we'll talk this thing over after the show. We'll see if there aint a way."

"Mac wouldn't have asked you about that ring if there had been a way. We all know how you've starved yourself and swung on, and you said he was dead-broke."

Jerry put a hand encouragingly on the girl's shoulder as the buzz sounded for the curtain.

"We'll see," she called back as she moved away.

Jerry did the pacing back and forth near the stage-entrance after the second act, to keep an eye on Bunnie and intercept a possible note. Once she opened the stage door and tried to peer out into the rain, but the swirl of water forced her back and threatened disaster to the crimped curls.

But Bunnie didn't come out. She had to make a change to the court-gown—the poor court-gowns that were sneaked into bundles when the sheriff wasn't looking—and she didn't have long to do it. Jerry left her post reluctantly when her cue came, and after the final curtain she plunged into her dressing-room and began to scrub off the make-up.

She had gotten into her shabby skirt when somebody knocked. It was Sam. He came in excitedly.

"I ain't got time to talk to you, Sam," she jerked out, looping up one side of the frizzy hair; "we'll go over things after a while. Don't you worry. Your pretty face will get you through somehow."

"It's not that, Jerry; it's Bunnie."

He was white around the mouth and the words came from between closed teeth.

"Well, well! I'm looking out for Bunnie, that's what I'm doing." She turned and glared at him. "Where do you get on?" she demanded.

"I get on where I blamed please," he replied. "I've got something to do. You keep Bunnie here. I'm going to attend to him!"

She slammed the door and locked it.

"Sam—wait a minute—Sam! You ain't going to fight. Bunnie hasn't done nothing. She's kept that man away. Why she's a trump!"

"Yes, yes, I know. But she's going now."

"Sam—don't; you'll be arrested. He's got money—wait a minute!"

"Jerry—!"

"I'll fix it. I won't let her go. It's all right. Sit down and get your head

straight." She pulled on the kimono. "Promise me you'll stay here till I come back or I'll lock you in—Sam! Well, well! I must be getting blind in my old days. I never suspected you!"

Sam dropped into the chair with his head in his hands and Jerry went out. She ran along the row of dressing-rooms, and was about to go up the short flight of stairs to the second tier when she stopped and called to a stage-hand

"Is—is anybody waiting?" she asked.

"No'm," he answered, catching her meaning.

"Well, if there is—shut him out!"

She climbed the stairs quickly. Bunnie was just getting into her shirt-waist. She flashed a look at the other girls, when Jerry came in, to see if they suspected anything, but Jerry was disarming.

"Girls," she said to the crowd, "I suppose you've heard about Mac, but it's not so bad. We're going to pull out somehow; we've done it before. We're going home and talk it over." She tried to catch Bunnie's eye but couldn't. "I've—I've got a plan," she added desperately.

Bunnie paused imperceptibly, but she didn't look at Jerry. Then she sat down before a mirror and deliberately put little touches to her toilet. She carefully caught up a stray curl with a hair-pin and pulled another down upon her forehead. Then she slowly dabbed some powder on her nose and chin and seemed to study arrogantly the mirrored reflection. Jerry stood by the door making dabs at her own hair, one side of which hung down. Finally, when the pause became awkward, one of the girls came forward and put her hand on Jerry's arm.

"Jerry, you're a brick!" she said briefly.

"Aw, quit your kiddin'," Jerry replied good-naturedly.

She hung around for a while, but Bunnie took her time about going. Jerry finally went out and noisily descended the stairs. She hadn't long to wait, and when Bunnie, a little later, slipped down into the darkness she found herself in Jerry's detaining arms.

"Don't, Jerry! Let me go!"

"Where are you going?"

"I—let me go—I'm going home."



"Girls," she said, "we're going to pull out somehow!"

"Bunnie, I know where you're going.
My dear little girl—"

"I can do as I please, I guess. Let go
my arm."

"Don't be foolish, dear, now—"

"Let me go, Jerry. Let me go!"

Jerry firmly pulled her into one of the
dressing-rooms and stood with her back
against the door.

"Now, Bunnie, we'll have this out.
You're not going! Things aint as des-
perate as all that."

"They're pretty desperate, I think,"
Bunnie replied. "Mac's got to get to
Habersham. It's not me; it's everybody.
He sees a chance. Well, he's going to
have it! Jerry, you're not my boss. I can
do as I please."

"I can keep you here."

"Yes, you can, but you're only messing
things up. You're only delaying us and
ruining Mac's chance. He doesn't want
to get there this time next year; he wants
to be in early and make a good bluff. He
wants to see the newspapers and— Let

me out, I—I can take care of myself."

"You'll will have a murder on your
hands. Sam'll kill him."

"Sam will only make a fool of him-
self. Sam hasn't anything to do with me."

"He loves you."

Bunnie made a gesture of dissent.

"Do you love him, Bunnie?"

"No!"

"It don't ring true—Bunnie—"

"No!"

"You *do* love him."

"No! No! No! Jerry, you can keep
me here to-night and to-morrow and the
next day, and the next, but you're just
spoiling our chances—do you hear me!
I'm going!"

"The old fool is waiting for you, I
suppose?"

Bunnie drew in her breath.

"Yes!" she replied defiantly.

Jerry put her head out of the door and
yelled for Mac. He came from somewhere
quickly, and as he appeared inside the
room she dug into her bosom and pro-

duced a small chamois-bag from which she extracted a large solitaire diamond-ring.

"Here, get all you can," she directed. "Now, skiddoo!"

She handed over the ring, and when Mac had gone she turned to Bunnie with an air of arrogant self-satisfaction.

"Now, young lady, wont you take off your hat and stay awhile?" she inquired.

Bunnie's tense figure swung forward. She leaned against the shelf and burst into passionate tears. Jerry listened for a while impatiently, then she went over and put her arms tenderly around the girl's shaking shoulders.

II

The man ahead had long ago ceased to be, so when the MacNutt's reached Habersham early Monday morning they filed patiently into the waiting-room until Mac could reconnoiter and spot a place to stop. Except Jerry. Without hesitation she climbed into a waiting bus that had the name of the best hotel in Habersham emblazoned across its polished sides.

Jerry felt that she was a down-trodden and badly-imposed-upon woman. She had sacrificed the one thing in life that was most dear. She would get the ring again; she had her right hand and her left hand and she could work, but it would never be the same. It had gone out of the family. She shut her teeth, thrust her determined chin forward and grew hard and surly.

Two fat bills nestled snugly in the chamois-bag where the ring had been and burned into her soul, but she tried to remember only that it was good to know the feel of money again; to know that she could taste a sip of luxury once more, if only for a week; to have her breakfast, her luncheon, and her dinner all on the same day; to ease her feelings by seeing a sleek, well-fed bell-boy tug at her suitcase and trot subserviently at her heels; to gaze once again upon the face of a decent register; to comb her hair at a mirror that didn't wave, and to ring, ring, ring the bell—if she wanted to.

"Rehearsal at ten," she called. "Prompt, now."

"Can't see why she wants a rehearsal," grumbled Billy. "We can do 'Boccacio' in our sleep."

"Orchestra," remarked Bunnie, briefly.

"Oh, pickles! They can't play it anyhow. Lot of yaps. I can do better by myself. But she's like a bear with a sore head this morning and she hasn't got a thing on me."

Bunnie looked at him sadly and turned away. Billy hadn't had his breakfast and he didn't know about the ring. Poor old Jerry!

Jerry waited with her chin in the air, and her tawny eyes looking out defiantly from under the fringe of straw-colored stuff that was her hair, but as the bus moved away each of the MacNutt's waved her an adieu so cheerfully and unselfishly that suddenly things were different. She felt like a neglectful mother leaving a lot of precious children. They were imposed upon, too; they were patient and uncomplaining, and Mac—poor old Mac!—was doing the best he could. She saw Bunnie's pretty face framed smilingly by a window-pane, her curls escaping bewitchingly from under her shabby, faded, old hat. She called to the driver to stop, dragged her suit-case across a fat woman and a dignified old man, squeezed two tourists and a drummer uncomfortably as she climbed down spasmodically and ran back along the sidewalk.

"Why, what's the matter?" they asked, as she burst in upon them and collapsed into a seat.

"I'm not going. It's too mean of me to be so selfish. The money will keep us all for a week. Why—Sam, tell that bus to move on!"

Sam started to do as he was told, when Bunnie came forward and pulled at the suit-case.

"Why not?" she demanded. "Here, Sam, hand her in. Of course she goes to the hotel, doesn't she, everybody? Nonsense, Jerry. Mac's looking out for us—don't you worry. And somebody's got to be at a decent place. Remember, we've come here to make a bluff. Why, perhaps Mac can get you an interview. Whistle for the bus, Billy; she's going."

Sam put her in again.

"Good heavens!" she ejaculated, breathlessly, as an excuse for crowding a second time, and one of the tourists raised his hat gallantly.

"Oh, certainly," he remarked.

Jerry sighed contentedly. It was something to brush elbows with a real gent occasionally. A pretty girl at the farthest end craned her dignified neck at Sam.

"My goodness, isn't he handsome?" she asked her companion. "Looks like a real actor, doesn't he?"

Jerry wanted to say that he was—nearly, and would have passed around the hand-bills if she'd had any. Instead, she put her head out of the window as the bus swung around the corner.

"Rehearsal at ten," she called again to Sam.

Sam couldn't hear, but it didn't matter. The point was made.

The hotel was a bustling, moving throng of people. She sprawled her name across the register and after it, "MacNutt Opera Company." Another point—perhaps. She could only have a little cubby-

hole of a room because of the crowd, and she was glad, glad. Crowds like that meant an audience. It only remained for the MacNutts to brace up and make a hit when they got the audience.

She met Mac near the elevator with an armful of show-cards that he was placing in conspicuous places. Mac was a hustler when he had anything to hustle on. A cut of herself as the Queen of Comic Opera adorned one corner. Blared across the top in startling letters was the announcement of the engagement of the MacNutt Opera Company, and following ambiguously was an attractive list of six operas.

"I hated to spend the money, Jerry," he confessed in an undertone, "but advertising pays, and we've got to let 'em know we're in town. Good job for a quick one, eh? Fixed it up by telegraph. You watch me. The paper here is great, and if we can just get 'em to-night and please 'em, I tell you, Jerry, I see light ahead."

"Yes, but have you got a place to stop?



Jerry didn't wonder somebody had gone crazy over her

Mac, they've been up all night, and breakfast—"

"Just a minute, Jerry. I'm hustling. I know the place to stop, and they shall have breakfast as soon as I get mine. I tell you, Jerry, I see—"

"Same old light ahead. Yes, I know, but there's a rehearsal at ten—change of opera!"

"Change of opera?" he echoed.

She slapped at the card where the names of the six operas appeared.

"You're a good press-agent, Mac. You don't commit yourself. Now, if all the paper reads like that, why can't we have something else besides 'Boccaccio?' Something that isn't hard, something good and snappy."

"Lord bless my soul!" he ejaculated.

"Now I see light ahead, too, and a piece of the silver lining flapping from behind the cloud, and Mac, the long lane's turning! It's do or die."

He looked at her, startled.

"Now, Mac, don't say costumes. I'll fix it somehow. Nothing is impossible; I wonder I didn't think of it before. I could sing 'Romeo and Juliette' in a petticoat and get away with it—if I could sing. Now, I've got a hundred dollars. I can costume anything with fifty although I could use forty thousand. I'll let you know at the theatre so you can fix the newspapers."

She went up to her room, freshened her collar with a piece of ribbon, trimmed the worn edges of her tailor-made, and brushed it until it was fairly respectable. It had cost ninety dollars two seasons before and still looked the money, although it was a bit frazzled.

She was sweeping majestically toward the dining-room when she met somebody else. They came together quite suddenly and without warning. He drew back and flushed, but she looked him over coolly.

"What are you doing here?" she demanded.

"Same reason as you, I guess," he replied; "to see the Fair."

She ignored the tone of raillery.

"You take it from me," she advised, "and don't wait to see the Fair. There's a man in our company just aching to knock the peeling off you."

"Unless I see him first," he laughed.

"I know who I'd bet on," she flung back, "and I've got the money to do it with—understand? A letter from home, relative died and left me a bundle. See?"

"I'm a little near-sighted," he replied good-naturedly.

She started to pass on then turned back.

"You take my advice and don't go hanging around Bunnie. She thought she needed a friend the other night and she took you for one—for a minute. She knows better now and she's going to be married, too. She don't need you!"

He pursed up his lips.

"Oh, very well," he remarked pleasantly and walked away.

She sought out an obscure table and dropped her chin upon her palm until she could regain control of herself. She was in a rage at circumstances and the endless fight she'd had all her life. Well, she'd win or she'd fight on. If the week ended badly, she'd drag Bunnie with her to be general bottle-washer while she cooked. She would have to fight for the ring and she would help Sam fight for Bunnie just because she wanted to.

....Once a curly little head had nestled on her breast....years ago the little eyes had closed and the curly head was gone....She hadn't loved anybody since until she met Bunnie, and if Bunnie loved Sam, she loved him, too. But she was tired and worn and suddenly she realized that she was growing old....

The breakfast cheered her. It was great to make the acquaintance of a napkin once more—a real linen napkin as big as a table-cloth; to have a cute row of silver to the right and another cute row to the left; a water-bottle perched on one side, and a real live palm on the other. And a *menu* card! In French, too! She didn't understand it but the words looked so familiar!

She reached the theatre first. Sam and Bunnie came in together soon after and then the others came straggling. She had a little talk with Bunnie after Sam had disappeared.

"Have you fixed it up?" she asked.

Bunnie hid her face on Jerry's expansive bosom.

"Yes," she whispered. "We can't be married for a long, long time for we must not be foolish, but we're willing to wait. And everybody who ever amounted to anything began at the bottom, didn't they? Sam will make his hit some day if he isn't hampered with me."

"Sam's face and figger is his fortune, and Broadway will see it that way some day—watch! He can sing, too, and if we ever get anything to work with, I'll teach him how to act. Then I want to see you keeping house for Sam. Dearie, the stage is a dog's-life for a woman even at the top—you want a home, don't you? I hope you're going to be very happy, Bunnie, and when I come to see you you'll let me rock the cradle like the old-fashioned moth-ers did, wont you?"

"Jerry!" Bunnie reproved. "You're getting worse than Mac for hopping."

It brought Jerry back to real things. She took off her hat, patted her hair, and stopped in the middle of the stage to clap her hands for attention.

"Now, Billy, old scout," she said, "just kick 'Boccaccio' in the waste-basket and haul out 'Pinafore.' "

"'Pinafore?' he repeated, blankly.

"Yes, 'Pinafore.' P-i-n-a-f-o-u-r — Pinafore. Not a baby's apron but an opera. Have you got it?"

"Yes, I've got it, but we're not billed for 'Pinafore'!"

"You take my word for it, we're billed for any old thing we want to sing, and we sing 'Pinafore.' "

"You can't costume it."

"Can't I? Why not? The men have shirts and pants haven't they?"

"Yes, some of 'em have shirts."

"Wear 'em on the outside and turn in the collars. There you are."

"But this thing is serious," growled Billy.

"You bet it's serious. And we're going to get at it just that way."

Billy snorted and folded his arms beligerently.

"And you'll do as I say," she continued, "or I'll fine you—your dinner."

"We haven't any sailor-hats," said Sam.



"I tell you, Jerry, I see light ahead!"

"Just look who's talking," she mocked. "We'll go out and chase little boys after the rehearsal. Here, I'm running this thing and we sing 'Pinafore.' It's tinkly and ripply, it's Gilbert and Sullivan—bless their dear old hearts—and it's funny! The cast is short and we can have somebody for the chorus—thank goodness!"

Billy brought out the parts and banged them down upon a chair.

"I only hope you'll have somebody for the audience," he remarked.

"Hope you get your hope, Billy. Here Sam—there's *Ralph*. Mighty little *libretto*, praise goodness. Now, please don't claw your ear when you're worried about the *Captain's* daughter, and remember your heart aint in your stomach."

"That's where my heart is, all right," Billy put in.

"Now try to act like John Drew, Sam. Loosen up your arms and don't get a ridge in your back. Johnny—*Sir Joseph*. You can make a bluff with the *major-domo* rig. The pants are white and the coat is black and — wear the hat cross-wise. Ought to have some gold braid, but the audience will never miss it if we're s n a p p y. Oh, I wish we was in New York for just about two minutes!"

"Well I'd stay there," ejaculated Billy.

"Now, I'll manage a policeman somehow for you, *Captain*.—hey, *Captain*!—and a messenger-boy for the cap—don't worry. The audience is going to sit up and take notice when they see this 'Pinafore.'"

"You bet they will," Billy declared. "They'll laugh."

"That's just what we want 'em to do," Jerry replied, complacently.

Billy went down into the orchestra and reluctantly distributed the music, while Jerry paused in dealing out parts to yell for the stage-hands.

"Here, give us a ship, can't you?" she called. "Yes, just a regular ship. An ocean-drop and — never mind about a light-house — we want a sail that wont tumble down on our heads. There are some things that aint funny. Cabin R., and ladder to upper deck—wish I had a trick ladder — mast and sail C. Hurry! Get busy!"

She had results in ten minutes.

"Where's Charlie?" she asked. "Buttercup—Charlie. I'd like to do it myself but I can't take chances with *Josephine*. You haven't forgotten Buttercup?"

"Not on your life," Charlie answered.

"And you're all right, too—just the eyes, just the size, just the figger—"

"Oh, let me play Buttercup, Jerry," Bunnie interrupted, "and make it dainty."

"Charlie will play Buttercup, Bunnie, and make it funny. Now you can make *Hebe* just as dainty as you like."

"But the skirt and the bonnet, Jerry, were in that trunk—" Charlie began.

"I'll get the skirt and the bonnet all right, all right," Jerry interrupted. "What's your waist?"

"Forty-seven," answered Charlie.

"Funny you keep so fat," she paused to remark. "Somebody jot that waist down so I wont forget. Now, Buttercup, come in on your ear if you can manage it. And *Captain*? Take cue early and funny business from upper deck with telescope *ad lib*. Might say, 'Can my eyes deceive me? No, it's—so-and-so'—some



"S-S-Sold!"

local name, you know. Old joke but it always goes. Don't crowd, boys. Shinn up there toward center. Now don't make me yell at you. I've got to sing this thing and I've got to have some voice to do it with."

The end of the chorus saluted her airily.

"No joshin', Jerry," he promised, "we'll be good."

"That's right, and now look cheerful. Remember this aint no funeral."

"I hope not," sighed Bunnie in the wings.

"No talking there, girls. We are all singing for our suppers now and we want to give these people a jam-up, ace-high performance. Now Billy, ready! Limber up, boys. We'll have a little George Cohan if you please. Oh, here, we're not going to a fire. There's a difference between snap and hurry. Once more!"

One false start and then they got going. They had new life in their voices, too. Why, she could almost smell the salt in the air. *Buttercup* was an innovation. Jerry herself couldn't keep from smiling at the size of the boy and the coy ways he affected. And Billy laughed outright.

"Don't," warned Jerry, "it's bad luck."

"Yes, but darn me if he *isn't* funny," Billy apologized.

They got through the first act and were half way through the last when Mac burst through the stage-door and halted in the center of the stage swinging his arms excitedly.

"What's the matter? What's the matter with the man?" Jerry bawled.

Mac began pounding his hat, and his teeth were chattering so the words refused to come. Jerry caught his hands and held them.

"Have you gone off your nut?" she demanded. "What is it?"

"S-s-s-s," he chattered. Then he caught his breath and tried again. "S-s-sold!" he got out at last.

"Sold?" gasped Jerry. "You or the house?"

He waved his hand at the house.

"Now what do you think of that?" Jerry asked feebly. "You're not joking, Mac? Or crazy?"

He shook his head.

"Sold!" he murmured. "Sold—every-thing!"

They smoothed him and soothed him until he could get back to earth. Billy climbed up over the piano and joined in the hysterical chorus.

"The college something-or-other took everything," Mac managed to tell them at last, "and then they didn't get all they wanted. A good house to-night means a good week. Why the week," he began calculating, "good gracious, it may go to three thousand!"

He looked at Jerry awe-struck.

"Aw, quit your kiddin', Mac," Jerry reproved. "There aint that much money in the world!"

She dismissed the rehearsal.

"I'm going to shop," she declared. "We're going to have clothes for 'Pin-afore,' we are. Dress-rehearsal at four, everybody—we'll give these people a show, Mac. Bless your dear old heart, we're out of the woods, aint we?"

But Mac didn't hear. He was gone. He appeared later rubbing his hands gleefully and rocking back and forth from his heels to his toes and then the other way around, like the old days. He paid salaries, too, and that night the curtain went up on the rejuvenated Mac-Nutts. He didn't know his own show. He wouldn't have believed it possible that a house crowded to the doors could work such wonders in people.

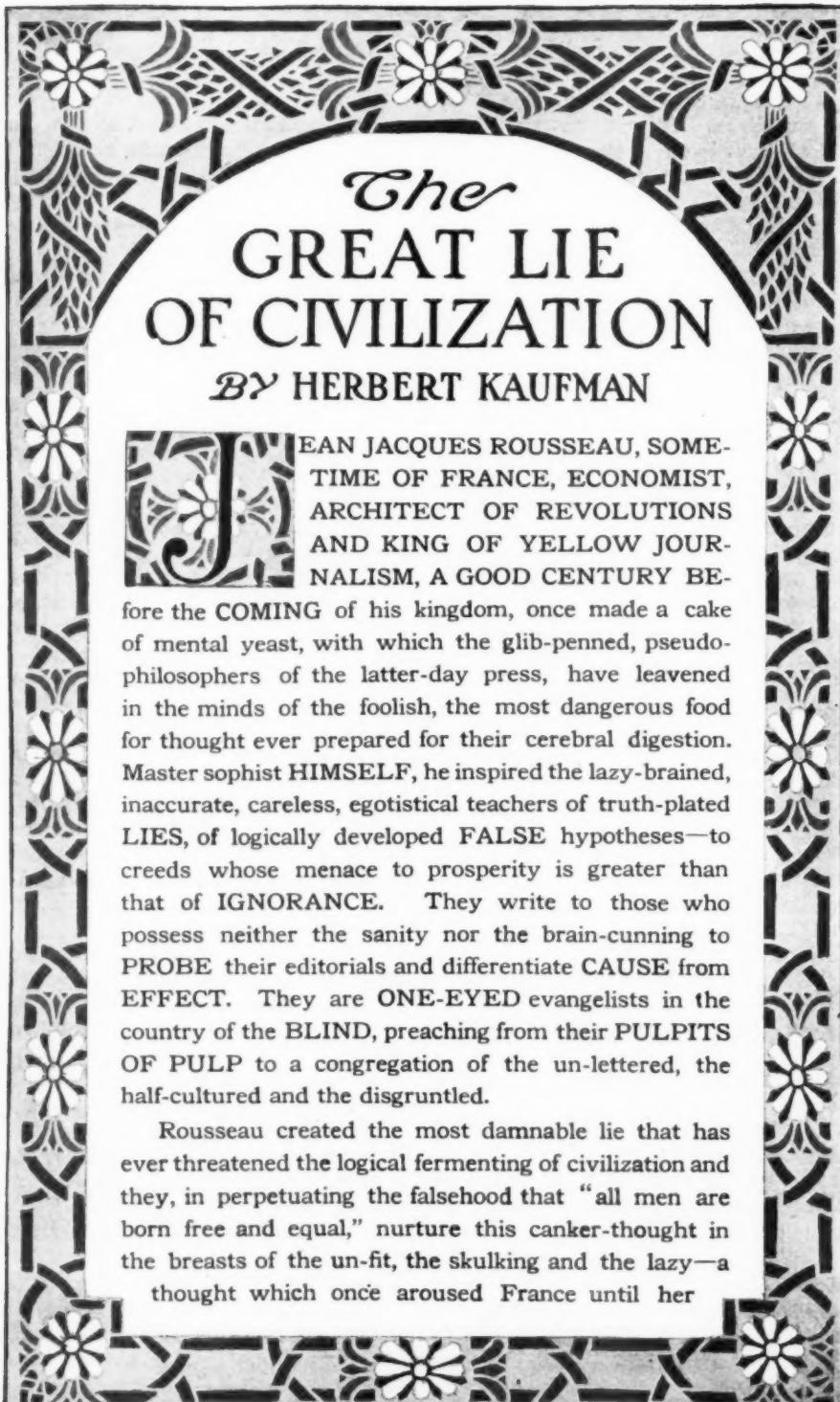
He found Jerry in an hysterical heap after the final curtain and petted her as if she had been a little child.

"Was that old chump out front?" she asked, and when Mac looked surprised she explained how she had met him in the hotel.

"I hope he began running when he heard them *encores*," she went on, "and if he's got any sense he'll keep on going. Rotten? Well, I guess nit!"

And the next morning when she came down to her breakfast she found Mac waiting for her with a package. Inside was a large, old-fashioned, solitaire diamond-ring. She slipped it on her finger.

"Now, no gush, Mac," she said good-naturedly. "Cut it!"

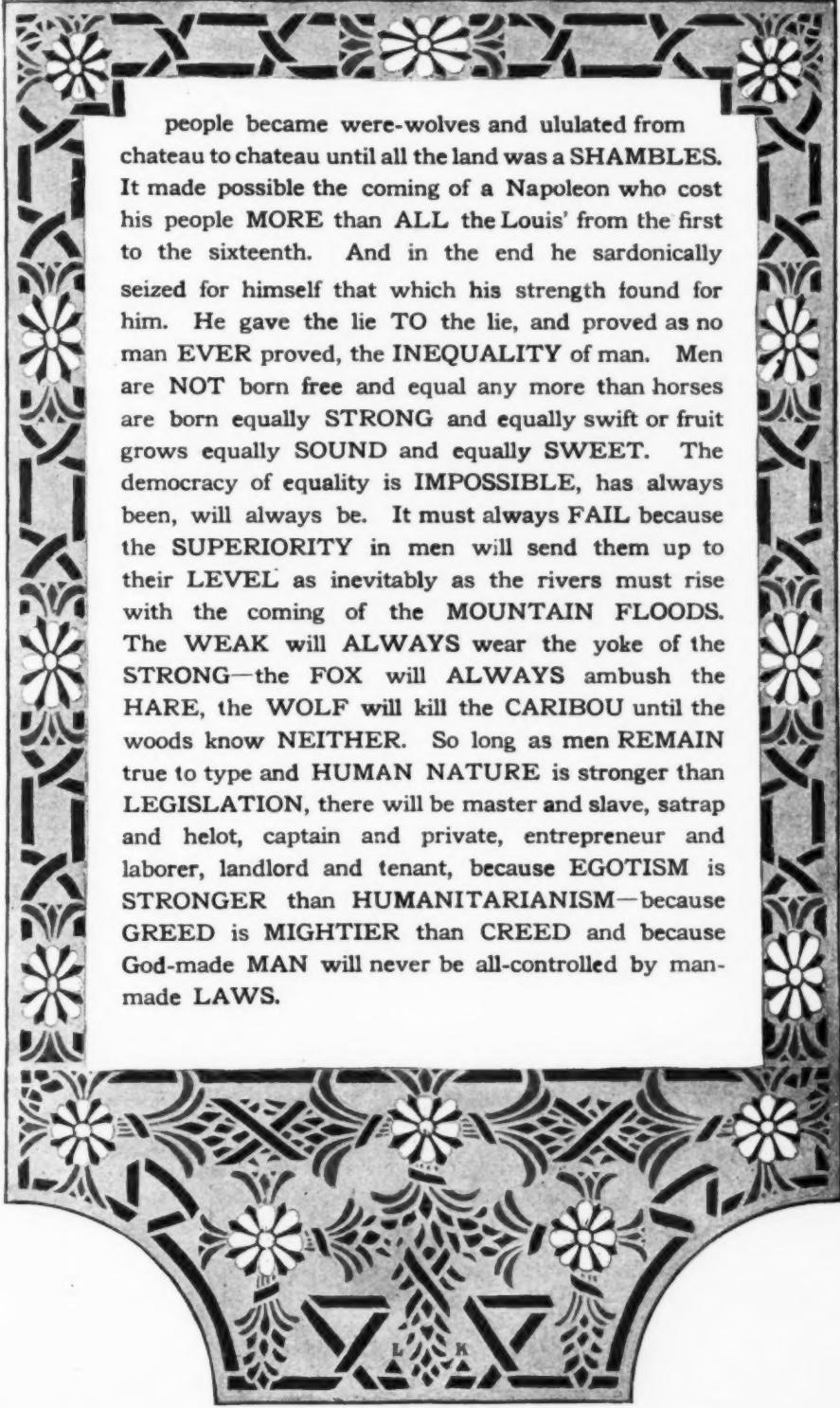


The GREAT LIE OF CIVILIZATION

BY HERBERT KAUFMAN

Jean Jacques Rousseau, sometime of France, economist, architect of revolutions and king of yellow journalism, a good century before the COMING of his kingdom, once made a cake of mental yeast, with which the glib-penned, pseudo-philosophers of the latter-day press, have leavened in the minds of the foolish, the most dangerous food for thought ever prepared for their cerebral digestion. Master sophist HIMSELF, he inspired the lazy-brained, inaccurate, careless, egotistical teachers of truth-plated LIES, of logically developed FALSE hypotheses—to creeds whose menace to prosperity is greater than that of IGNORANCE. They write to those who possess neither the sanity nor the brain-cunning to PROBE their editorials and differentiate CAUSE from EFFECT. They are ONE-EYED evangelists in the country of the BLIND, preaching from their PULPITS OF PULP to a congregation of the un-lettered, the half-cultured and the disgruntled.

Rousseau created the most damnable lie that has ever threatened the logical fermenting of civilization and they, in perpetuating the falsehood that "all men are born free and equal," nurture this canker-thought in the breasts of the un-fit, the skulking and the lazy—a thought which once aroused France until her



people became were-wolves and ululated from chateau to chateau until all the land was a SHAMBLES. It made possible the coming of a Napoleon who cost his people MORE than ALL the Louis' from the first to the sixteenth. And in the end he sardonically seized for himself that which his strength found for him. He gave the lie TO the lie, and proved as no man EVER proved, the INEQUALITY of man. Men are NOT born free and equal any more than horses are born equally STRONG and equally swift or fruit grows equally SOUND and equally SWEET. The democracy of equality is IMPOSSIBLE, has always been, will always be. It must always FAIL because the SUPERIORITY in men will send them up to their LEVEL as inevitably as the rivers must rise with the coming of the MOUNTAIN FLOODS. The WEAK will ALWAYS wear the yoke of the STRONG—the FOX will ALWAYS ambush the HARE, the WOLF will kill the CARIBOU until the woods know NEITHER. So long as men REMAIN true to type and HUMAN NATURE is stronger than LEGISLATION, there will be master and slave, satrap and helot, captain and private, entrepreneur and laborer, landlord and tenant, because EGOTISM is STRONGER than HUMANITARIANISM—because GREED is MIGHTIER than CREED and because God-made MAN will never be all-controlled by man-made LAWS.



"The buzzards mark him"

The Fear

BY EDWIN BALMER

Author of "Telefunken," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY JAY HAMBIDGE

I

THIS, master, may be that which saves thy love?"

"It may be, Abel," Lytton replied, and let fall his eyes.

"But if it be not?"

The American, puzzling absently over the little, hard cylinder which the Arab had given him, slipped his hand automatically into his pocket.

The Arab plucked at his sleeve with respectful protest.

Lytton looked up.

"I meant, master, not *backsheesh*," he said humbly. "I meant, if this be not that which you seek, shalt thy heart

surely wither? I know," the Arab went on again after an instant, as his master did not answer. "I know, oh, master," he said, "that for birth and for marriage, for preservation in war and for every security from death, but most especially for love and desire, there be charms and potent tokens. I know also," he bowed respectfully, "that you and your old men"—he pointed across the sand-dunes and burrows, scorching under the dazzling desert light, to where a group of older Americans and Europeans gathered about their excavations—"I know also," he repeated, "that you deny every charm, though you have scratched our arms with the bone knife to keep away the pitting-

fever. I shall not ask, then, that you grant you seek a charm. But I ask, master, canst thou not return to her thou lovest without that which you seek?"

"I can not return," the American inclined his head.

Abel Hotep, the Mohammedan, turned on his heel and walked away. He was a poor man and had, therefore, but one wife. Her he now sought.

Like his father and his grandfather, who remembered Rich's expedition of 1811—the 1189th from the Hejira—he dug from the sand the strange, scratched clay bricks and cylinders which so greatly and so wonderfully delighted the mysterious foreigners. What those clay-writings might be, Abel had discussed a thousand times with Alva, his wife.

The explanation the Europeans gave, that those scratches on the clay told what men three thousand years dead had done, and whom they had conquered, and whom they had killed: these were tales for children. For who would give so much for, and take such delight in, the idle tales and boasts of men so dead? No, surely, there was another reason. And now, as Abel told his wife, his young master had practically admitted it. He sought a charm, without which he could not return to his people. That was why every night, for the months they had been in camp, these men pored over and studied the clay they had found; and why the elders, who were obviously more skilled in the charms than young Lytton, chanted them to him in the evening.

Abel watched more carefully that night; and ah, was it not so?

His master lay upon his cot, and one of the old men read to him.

"'My winged bulls I set before my temples, and my cattle of furious mien to guard my gates.' " The heavy rhythm of the words reached the listening Arab. "'My fields grew green and ripened, and my watered gardens overflowed. Under the fruit-bearing trees sang my women and my slaves. I levied my troops till the ways choked with their uncountable flood. Then I set forth. Like Ramman, the God of storm, I poured upon them the flood of my uncountable troops,' " the

heavy rhythm kept up. "'I scattered their corpses far and wide, covered the plain with their bodies, and streamed out their blood with the sword. Their winged bulls I overthrew, and their cattle of furious mien which guarded their gates; and I entered their palaces with rejoicing. All their kings and the substance of their kings—'"

The Arab peered in as the reading ceased suddenly. Evidently, though his master had been extraordinarily interested, that was not the charm; for the reading began again from another cylinder of clay.

"'I am Satiris Hythoris, whose father does Bel, the great God, cherish as his high priest. To the soul of Amenashi do I devote this. By this he shall know that, as king, he may return to his own. When we were young with him, Amenashi, the gods bound me and set him overlord of my soul; but in his anger Bel turned against him and—'"

"Ah! did I not say," Abel asked triumphantly of Alva, his wife, "that these men search but for charms and sorceries buried by the demons of the desert. Did I not say it? Listen!

"To-night I watched. And to-night, as on other nights, they read to him charms which he had found. The master is worn and lies down while one of the old men reads. But before this charm avail, a jackal howls from the desert, and the spell is broken. But again he reads, and now, as my master listens, his breath comes very hot and quick. His arms stiffen and he lies very still. The spell—the spell he sought, and which permits him to go back to his people—at last has come to him. Look! he bears it with him and does not give it up. And does he not say his farewells now to the aliens, and give double *backsheesh* to us? For to-morrow he goes with his horses, his donkeys, and his supplies.

"I and thee, Alva, as we love him much, will return to Hillah with him—even to Bagdad, for he pays well. The master is too generous; the Khanjees will rob him. He who keeps the Khan beyond Mahmudich, where the Persians pass to Kerbela, is most completely a

thief. I shall go with him even to the sea. Haste thou and come with the master!"

II

Eighteen years before and four thousand miles from that shore of the Mediterranean, at Beirut, where Abel took leave of his master, two little children played upon the American beach of the Atlantic. With wet sand which the tide had washed, they modeled very crude but satisfying figures while their nurses watched from the shade of a pier.

The little fingers finished and patted the form smoother. The girl-baby regarded it seriously.

"The cow wif wings," she said approvingly. "Some day can we make him standing up?"

"Two then," the boy agreed eagerly. "Always there are two standing up!"

"Yeth; always there *are* two. And when they stand up they have *six* feet."

"Four on the side and two in front. We'll make 'em some day."

"But—" flutteringly, "but mamma—don't—don't let her know or she wont let me."

"Wont let you what?"

"Play wif you. She—she—I told her 'bout 've cows wif wings and the bwiges wif water on top you told me about and she was mad. She said you was fwightening me and you shouldn't play."

"I wasn't frightening you! You knew about the bridges. You knew about them yourself. You said you did."

"I did; and it doesn't fwighten me anyway. I like to fink 'bout them."

"So d'I; but they got awful cross faces, aint they?"

"The cows? Yeth; awful fwowny."

"And the funny long bridges with the water running along on top; the water *does* run all along the top, doesn't it?"

"Yeth; and it's all dwy and gween underneath—"

The child's vision of a winged bull and an ancient aqueduct was a strange thing to hold two young spirits together, especially as, one time or another, psychologists would tell you, the children

must merely have seen, somewhere, pictures of the things their imaginations gave them back now; and the "fwowny cows" and "bridges with water on top," as being objects of especial peculiarity, remained particularly vivid and wonderfully interesting.

But as these things, though thus easily accounted for, were believed to "frighten" the children, they were forbidden to be mentioned and even to be dreamed about. Whereby they were very securely perpetuated; for dreams are essentially perverse and uncontrollable; and when as wonderful as these children's were, they *must* be talked about.

"There were soldiers last night—an awful whole lot," the girl would begin sometimes.

"And they knocked over the old winged bulls and the fwowny cows," the boy would add.

The "fwowny cows" were certainly no jibe. It was merely a reminder to them both of how long, in spite of their very few years, they had had this wonderful, secret thing between themselves.

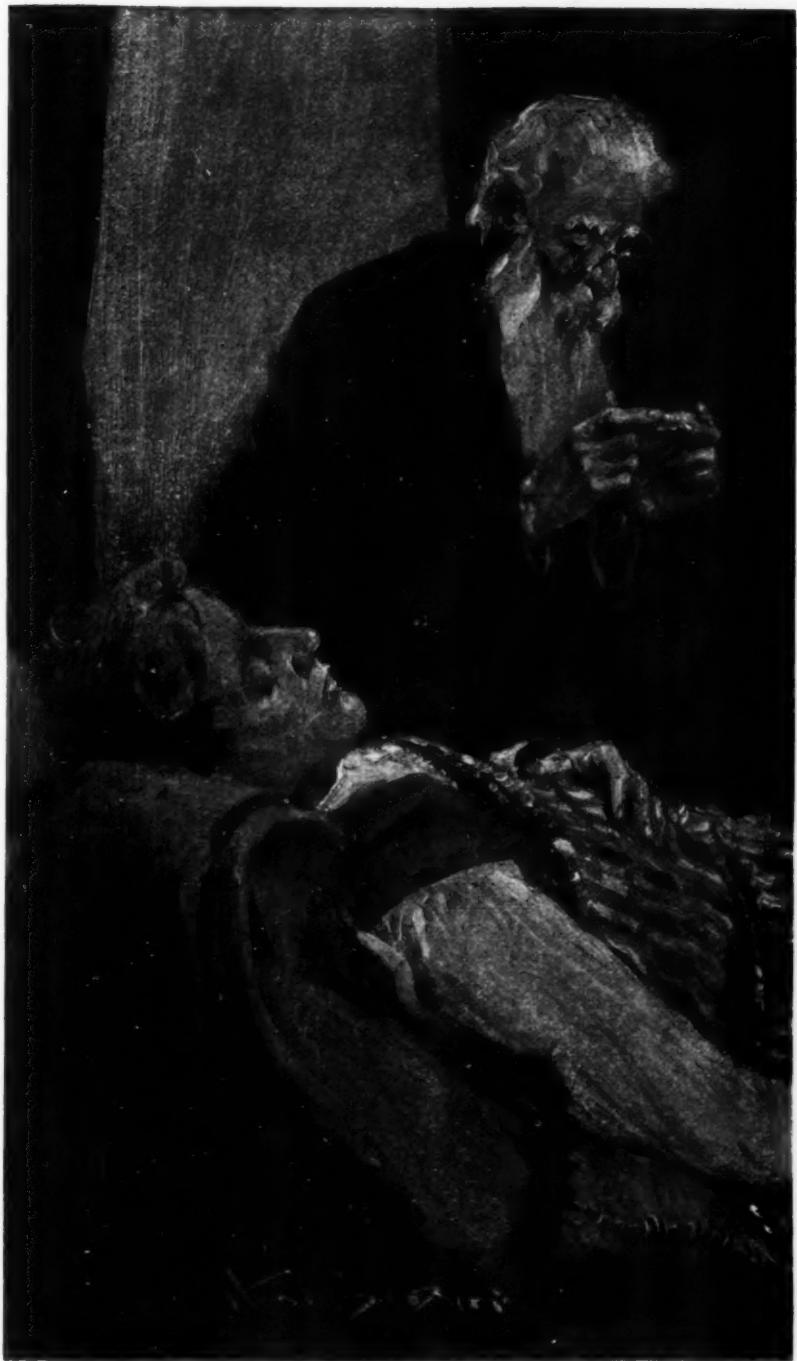
The girl smiled and the boy smiled back, still unafraid, before the wonder of it. They were children still. But then:

Suddenly the Fear had come. The dreams which they compared that day "frightened" at last. The winged bulls and the sentinel cattle of furious mien, the soldiers, and the conquest, were there as before and the heaps of the conquered dead. And no more than before did that bring the fear. But now others were added to the vision. There were a priest, and a woman, and One—one who was dead. Only one added, but whose death suddenly brought the fear more than all the heaps which the soldiers slew.

"It—you—you frighten me so. Oh, I'm so afraid—afraid of you!" the girl sobbed out upon the boy that day. "Oh what does it mean?" she sobbed again when he spoke to her. "It—you—you frighten me so. Oh you frighten me so!"

And crying thus once afterwards she had dismissed him, and sent him away, when he had spoken of the inevitable between them.

"Oh, yes; I love you. Oh, I love you so. But I can't. I can't! For I'm afraid.



He lay upon his cot and one of the old men read to him

It—oh you—you frighten me so. It—you frighten me!"

So he, who had been a little boy, playing with her on the sands, but was a man now, had gone away.

And on the ship from the Asiatic ports which passed through quarantine just before the gates of New York closed that evening, he was coming back.

And the girl?

Another man was beside her, and they were waiting, together.

"I have had word from the steamship offices," she was saying, "the boat would dock to-night."

"That means before six o'clock then."

"So he could probably catch the 7:03 train."

"The one arriving here at 9:30? Yes, I think so."

The repetition of these trivialities stopped with a jerk. The girl shivered slightly.

"It—it is almost half after now," she said.

The man watched her anxiously.

"I'll change about going back to town to-night, if you don't mind," he said. "I think I'll put up here again."

The girl flushed.

"You think, after all, you won't trust me?" she said.

"You know it isn't that," he touched her gently.

"Why, then?"

He tightened his grasp upon her till, under his steady arm, she felt herself consciously trembling.

"You're frightened."

"If I wasn't," the girl tried to tease him, "I wouldn't want you to trust me."

"You mean," he dropped her suddenly, "you might even now—"

"I told you," the girl met his eyes honestly, "that we were—we were sort of bound together in our spirits when we were children. And I thought—I thought there could never be anyone else than he, any other at all. And then suddenly I became afraid of him. I told you about that. I was afraid; *afraid*. And he had to go away."

"But if—if you are not afraid of him to-night?" the man asked. "If you find

now that really he doesn't frighten you?"

"He will only frighten me more. I tell you I had the—the dream again last night. But I must see him; I must see him, if he comes."

"Then I shall stay."

"No, you can't help me. So, if you ought to go back to-night, please—please do. Listen! There is his—the train now. Good-night!" She raised her lips to his. "Good-night. And listen! I love you and shall marry you to-morrow. I am saying it. Do you hear? I love you and shall marry—you!"

The man passed out through the opened door which he left ajar behind him.

It was early Spring, fair and warm, and the air wafted into the house gratefully. But in the corner of the dark, heavy room where the girl was waiting, the fire had been lighted upon the hearth.

Before it she twisted about in the big, deep chair, and with her arms thrown over its back, she dropped her forehead upon them.

"The winged bulls—" she found herself whispering senselessly. "The winged bulls."

Suddenly she started. A nervous, forceful, familiar step had struck upon the gravel outside.

"Helen!" Lytton sprung through the opened door. "Helen!"

"Edward!"

She gave him both her hands, but as he caught his breath to speak, she spoke hurriedly before him.

"You heard about my marriage," she explained his coming for him, "and so broke your silence of centuries to come yourself and be here, old friend, didn't you?"

She shook, almost boisterously, the hands which held hers. "Didn't you?" she urged.

The other had dropped her hands as if by way of answer.

"Oh, you've been sick!" the girl cried at once with quick concern. "I didn't see. How burned and thin you are. Why, my dear, how burned and thin you are! I'm so glad you've come back so that we may take care of you. Why, you've been sick."

"I've been; but I think—I hope I'm getting all right now."

"That's good; but what's been the matter? Where did you get burned so black. You're a positive Arab."

"I might well be, I've been in Arabia."

"In Arabia?"

"Assyria, I should say—the part where old Assyria was."

"But I thought you were in Europe—in Germany and Russia."

"I didn't go there at all."

"But your letters. You wrote so little and at such awfully long intervals that they—"

"Yes, I had my mail sent to America through Germany, as I had the letters from here sent there. But I wasn't there. I cabled you from Naples, too; but I didn't take the boat there. I took it at Beirut."

He paused, gazing into her face.

"But what—" she began, as if in spite of herself. "But what in the world," she altered it extravagantly, "were you doing in Assyria—in Arabia, I mean?"

"In Assyria," he corrected. "What?" he repeated. "'It' was Assyria. You knew that."

"What was?"

"'It' was Assyria; you knew that," he repeated.

"There never was enough to know 'It' was any place, especially, that really had been," the girl sought to deny.

"But from what there was, you knew, if any place, it was Assyria?"

"Yes," grudgingly.

"So I went there. Exactly for what, I did not know myself—at first."

"At first?" the girl asked.

She had raised her head suddenly and listened. A step sounded outside, coming nearer each instant; but it passed without pausing and kept on. Lytton seemed not to have noted it at all. The girl had reseated herself in the big chair and as he threw himself upon the wide-seat which flanked the fire-place, he was gazing steadily and intently into the flickering red and yellow flames as one gazes when everything beside that which he is forming in his mind is of no account to him, or when everything else for him depends upon *that*.

"I was there almost a year before I knew exactly why I had come. I mean, rather, before I found any reason for being there. I spent that first year dreamily, lazily you might say, with the Arabs and the Bedouins; and sometimes even with tribes of the poor, miserable 'Afej who now hold those deserts where, beneath the sand, the greatest and most wonderful cities of the dead world lie."

Unconsciously, or perhaps even against her will, the barrier which the girl at first had raised and so carefully maintained between them, now seemed slipping away. As he hesitated, she made no reply but put forward her hand upon the seat beside him.

"Night after night, Helen," he went on then, "I lay in their tents pitched upon those sands where those great cities had been; and sometimes when I camped with the poorer of the wanderers, I lay upon the mounds over the old palaces with no covering at all. And I used to lay awake often, those nights, looking up into the stars. And even there, as long as I kept my eyes open and could reason it out sanely, one would say, I told myself that I had come for nothing. I told myself over and over again that what we had had between us—and which finally came so between us," he said gently, "was only our imagination and our dreams building upon things we had been, or been told, as children. That the things we knew had never been for us and that I—I had come to Assyria senselessly.

"And then, Helen," he turned to her a moment, and as he saw the tension, almost the fearfulness with which she was following him, he looked away again, as if to make it easier for her rather than for himself. "And then, Helen, perhaps on one of those very nights when I was just through telling myself that, the dreams would come to me again—oh so vividly. And did—did they not come to you, too, while I was away?"

"Yes," she whispered. "Yes, Edward."

"The same as before—only more vividly?"

"Yes; much the same and sometimes more vividly—the armies and the winged bulls, the temples and the priest and—and the woman with the queer clay thing,

and the One—the one who was dead. But they were always still broken and disconnected, just—just scenes."

"I know," the boy said calmly. "I know. There was no connection. It wasn't clear, even, whether the soldiers who marched out were the same who came afterwards and knocked over the winged bulls and took the city, or whether they were the enemy. And it wasn't clear even how he—the one who was dead—had died, whether the soldiers had anything to do with it or what; or what the woman with the queer clay vessel had to do with either."

"No," the girl agreed hurriedly, "no; it wasn't."

"But as it came to me so vividly one night, it seemed to say to me that I had not come there, to Assyria, for nothing. I mean, it seemed to give me a purpose for coming which I had not felt at all before. It seemed to say to me that night that, though everything else the—the scene showed was become dust ages ago, the clay vessel, the cylinder, still remained; and it was shown to me that I might find it. And the next day, the very next day, as I was riding out, I encountered the new American Assyriological expedition come to excavate a recently discovered site of a very great and unknown ancient city.

"I joined them!"

"You joined that expedition?" the girl asked wonderingly. "Wait! There was an account, written by one of its leaders, published a few months ago which told of an Edward Lyon. I believe it was, who joined them and—"

"Yes. I dropped the 'T's out of my name; that was all. I knew they were sending back reports, and in case they mentioned me—"

"You didn't want me to know you were there."

"No. I thought it might—concern you unnecessarily. I did not care to have you know I had gone there to look for anything till I might know something—definite."

"Definite?"

"No, perhaps not entirely. For you can explain this away, too, if you wish. I have not tried, especially. But you may

be able to, perhaps. Long ago I accepted this—this which was between us. But you have always rebelled against it and feared it. Listen!

"I went with that expedition and searched day after day with the workmen. We dug for months over this city which we had not yet identified. It might be any one of six or eight of the great lost cities of Assyria—perhaps all of them. For city below city, civilization below civilization, like bricks in their own walls, lay beneath us.

"I found many scores, hundreds of such cylinders as I—I was seeking. They ranged in inscriptions," he continued, "from household receipts to records of dynasties. The other men would read them to me, sometimes, in the evenings.

"And then one night, when I was sick a little, and lying on my cot in my tent, one of the men came to me again to read from tablets I had given him that day to decipher.

"I was not well, I say; and as I lay there upon the ruin-mound and listened, perhaps my imagination filled in too much. But surely, at least, I was awake and as he read, the words painted clearly before me the first picture of my—of our dream, with all the detail which before had been only vague and disconnected.

"I seemed to see clearly the temples, and forts, and the green gardens beyond. There were fruit trees and vines amid which the women and slaves sang at their work; great temples and palaces, forts and walls with the huge winged bulls beside the gates. Priests prayed and made sacrifices to their gods and the smoke wreathed lazily against the sky. Then the streets filled suddenly with soldiers and I saw the bright sun flash upon their arms. The legions and phalanxes went forth and joined with their allies from other cities. They marched together and conquered the world. All the kings of all the countries they dragged at their chariots; all the wealth, all the splendor and the power was theirs and then:

"My God! The words had ceased, and out upon the sands in the shadow of a ruin-mound, a jackal snapped at the bones of a camel and howled. A dozen miserable 'Afej from their vile corral



"The dream was of armes and winged bulls and temples"

slunk about our tents for a chance to steal. As far as I could see over the barren ground, only a cloud of dust stirred where a band of Bedouins traveled toward Hillah. And on the other side, upon the lower ground beyond the old buried

walls, a buzzard screamed as it searched in the withered grass for the dry body of a snake or lizard left from the river's last overflow. All was a desolation, a desert, a wilderness. And then:

"They read to me again, Helen. The

cylinder I had given them was like that of my dream; but so had been a hundred others. And you may say that I chose to take this one, rather than that this one came to me. You may say that if it had not come to me then, I should have waited till, among the thousands we unearthed, I found one which suited me. But I will only give you the words. They were these:

"I am Satiris Hythoris," they read then to me, "whose father does Bel, the great God, cherish as his high priest. To the soul of Amenashi do I devote this, that by this he shall know, when he lives again, as king he may return to his own.

"For when we were young with him, Amenashi, the Gods bound my spirit and set him overlord of my soul. But before I went to him, Bel, in his anger, struck fear into my heart so that it fell before him and I put him away from me. And then did Nabuniad, the king, decree that I go in marriage to Umanem, his lord, to whom I am given to wife; yet now on the eve of my wedding has Amenashi returned to me whom, in spite of my fear, the gods held bound with me and who holds my heart. And I pray unto Bel, the Great God of Creation, to restore me, and unto Shamash and Ninna, to dissolve my fear. But they would not and again he is gone away from me. And though I say with my tongue, "Umanem I love and him shall I marry," yet Amenashi is gone, the lord of my heart. And now he, Amenashi, the lord and ruler of my life is dead; and I die ere I lie with Umanem whom my tongue gives me to wife.

"For the king of my heart is dead; and not as the fickle cry, so may I say, "Him that was above us is fallen; let another rise in his place!" For my lord and king is dead; and there can be no other. And to him I cry, "O King! Rule forever!" And to the return of his life, which the Gods have promised, do I devote this, that he may know that he may rule me in that life and forever.

"For from me, Satiris Hythoris, whose father does Bel the great God cherish, hath Merodach turned his anger at last and Bel-Merodach hath tempered his wrath and Tashmet hath heard my

prayer. And they have granted me life again with him and with fear once more to test me.

"And that at that time I shall not fail, here do I, Satiris Hythoris, whose father does Bel the great God hold as his high priest, cry unto Bel, and Shamash, and Ninna, and all those of the gods who may be powerful to give and to take away, to defeat and to prosper, to bear this to him and make me, the maiden of his heart, return to his love if it be deserted; and Oh Bel and Shamash and Ninna, Merodach, as in the Esagila thou art acknowledged and worshiped, Nebo and Tashmet give him life with me and see that, as king of my heart, he rules forever!"

For a moment, as the blood still ran hot and flushed into Lytton's cheeks, and his hands still clenched at his side, there was silence in the great room. Then, from without, in the stillness, came again, through the open door, the sharp, firm click of a steady tread. It became more distinct as it approached, then suddenly ceased entirely. And the girl, though through half of her brain the blood seemed to run hotly and to flood it feverishly, with the other half terribly and coolly tense and acute, listened for the step without sound again. And presently, as she listened, it struck again upon the pavement and died away.

"You—you found that?" she discovered that the feverish half of her brain was making her say. "They read you that? It means—it means—"

"It means—"

"No—no! I know what you are going to say; but not yet! Is this real? Is this true, I mean?" She grasped his sleeve and shook it. "Edward, this—is not a trick? This is—you are not trying to trick me? You did not make this up? Wait! How can I know that what you found means that—that you found it at all? That it is true?"

"No—no! I didn't mean that, Edward. But I'm—it has unstrung me so. I know it's true. I mean. I know you didn't try to trick me, of course. I know that you found that and it's true—I mean that they read you what you said. You didn't—of course you didn't try to de-

ceive me. But how can I know that I should trust that, I mean? That—that—how can I know I can believe *that*, even if it is as you say?"

She lay back hot yet trembling, angry before the terror which the thing she repudiated struck to her.

"The next morning," Lytton answered her simply, "the very next morning, as I was preparing to leave, your letter came giving the date of your wedding. I figured it out, and it allowed me just time. So I came."

"So you have come—to prevent it—the very night before?"

She shrank under his eyes.

"Yes! But Oh Helen, what are your promises—the promises of your voice only—as that one wrote—compared to—to this which is between us? You have shrunk from it because it frightened you, and have tried to deny it, and stifle it, and beat it down. But it would not die; so it has had to come to you again—now."

"Listen!" he cried, merciless in his earnestness. "You shall listen! For this has come back to make you."

"Oh, if you had lived where I have lived and been willing to see what I have seen, you would understand and be willing to accept. But you have not because you stayed here where everything is, as far as you can see, in man's control, and where you must accept nothing, for you see nothing except such as you or another can control. But I have been where men, generations, even nations are nothing nothing but playthings in the hands of Fate, and have seen Destiny rule and been not ashamed to bow to it."

"Listen, Helen. You say you read the account of that expedition. Did you read also the story of finding the corner-stone of Sargon's temple which his high priest had cursed. 'Whoso moves this, my inscribed stone, his foundations may Bel and Shamash and Ninna tear up, and may whatever he undertakes not prosper?' And did you laugh at that, as you read it? Well, have you heard since of the plagues and murders, the attacks and assassinations which followed upon the party which removed that stone—and that party alone? Have you heard of the fires, and finally the wrecking of the

ship which carried it? And do you know that one of the leaders, who directed the moving of that stone, is now under a cloud, facing disgrace? But that—that is only one little thing—oh only one so little thing!

"For I have seen, as Fate ruled it, the poorest and meanest of peasants draw their plows over the palaces of Khorsabad and the herds of the miserable nomads pastured upon the slopes of the Nimrûd.

"I have seen, as it was written, the wild beasts and the wilder men of the desert plunder the temples and the palaces of the power and glory of these milleniums; and have seen, verily, 'the beasts of the desert dwell with the jackal in the capital which *was* inhabited no more from generation to generation and no one arose in the city or dwelt in it.' So *I* know that there are things which no man—no, no age or nation—can control, and which no scientist or psychologist can explain away; and I bow before it. But you rebel! Though I come here with what raises me—raises you above all rules and conventions and promises which you could make, you rebel; though *I* know and *you* know—"

But the girl, though half her mind was fixed with fascinated concentration upon the man before her, with the other half seemed straining for a sound without; and suddenly, as the *portières* opened, she sprang away and into the arms of the one who entered.

"Oh I'm so glad you didn't go!" she cried and hid her face against his breast. "Oh my dear," she shivered, "I'm so glad you've come. I'm so afraid. He—he frightened me so!"

III

"The buzzards mark him. Last night one settled on his tent-pole."

The beams from the white, glowing moon glinted hot from the desert, and before the parched wind of the early night, the grains of sand smarted, and clung like cinders to the flesh. Yet the tall Arab shivered slightly.

He closed his tunic closer and the

muscles of the arm hanging at his side drew tense.

"I beat it away," he went on hollowly as his eyes shifted about. "It can bring me no good; but the bird comes too soon."

"He lives still," the woman replied hopefully. "Shall we not cheat the vulture yet?"

"With the shovel? Listen! Aye," the man went on after an instant, "didst thou not hear, Alva, my wife, the croaking?"

"The frog?"

"In the marsh, where the Euphrates flooded, the grass is again withered and the ground baked and cracked. Thou knowest the frogs are dried and dead. But the buzzard—"

"The buzzard croaks?"

"And the woman weeps. How do you weep, woman?" he asked as he turned his own face away.

"Only as thou, O man, for an alien."

"An alien? Was it his blame where his people toiled or what his hair and skin may be?"

The woman shook her head and smiled sadly. She turned and pointed past the tent-encampments of the white men to the excavations beyond where, deep below the sands, and still below each newly discovered layer of civilization, the foreigners dug for the oldest city of Assyria.

"Aliens come for that," she went on contemptuously. "To dig for the lost treasures, to scrape for the bricks they worship and to make us burrow like swine in their trenches. But he—he came for us. Where now is thy son, but for him? Why, but for his scratch, are our skins smooth and our cheeks without the pit? Why do plagues and the quick-smiting fever come no more to us? Who of us now fears his neighbor or threatens his life? Yet these others," she ended bitterly, "these others who make us no more than burrowing swine are strong and well, while he—he fades away."

"Aye. Even the hours now waste him."

"Once, thou saidst, thou found the charm which gave him courage and strength."

"Aye. He took it, thinking it such. But it availed not and his heart faileth. Many times I have brought him clay, praying

it might serve him. But now he takes it not."

"His skin becomes drum-heads upon the hollows of his cheeks. Yet still he is straight and fair. And his limbs—"

She made a circle with the tip of her finger upon the tip of her thumb and observed it.

"His forearm is that; and yet he is strong and his commands ring. He will command even when his knees strike in their weakness. Ah—look!"

From the nearest tent of the little canvas encampment upon the sands of the ruin-mounds, a tall, thin figure arose and came slowly forward. He seemed to move, not wearily, but with the steady advance of one walking in a dream, and he argued with himself in whispers.

"The aliens do not watch their brother well," Abel rebuked. "But his servants —"

He started toward Lytton anxiously.

The latter had stopped and with silent, wondering gaze scanned the sands stretching empty, save for the encampment which he had left, in every direction. He turned to the servant standing patiently at his side:

"You dream, Abel?" he asked.

"Many things, master," the Arab answered readily, and without surprise.

"And those dreams shall be realized, Abel, you believe?"

"In Heaven, master, it may be, if not here. Who may know?"

"Yes, in Heaven it may be," the other agreed slowly. "Who may know?" he murmured after the manner of the Oriental.

The servant touched him respectfully but with the rebuke of concern.

"Come, master," he pointed back to the tent.

"I had a strange fancy to-night, Abel," Lytton confided, smiling as he delayed. "I fancied—that some one was coming—some one who—wait!" his grip upon Abel's arm startled even the Arab. "Some one comes!" he cried. "The dust!" he pointed far out under the moon. "I can not see the riders; but the dust. See!"

"Aye!"

The servant's calm, even voice struck the excitement from the other as quickly



The voices of the old men came distinctly from the other tent

as it had come. "The riders we sent two days ago with dispatches return from Hillah to-night with new supplies. They will be here within an hour. Come, master," the calm voice persisted, "thou art very worn. Come to thy bed and rest. Be sure that if there be dispatches or aught for thee, I will at once appear. Rest, now."

The American bowed his head in assent and followed.

From the tent touching his upon the farther side, the voices of two of the older men came to him clearly and distinctly as he lay wakefully waiting. They had unearthed that day, it appeared, a strange new thing.

Within the high altar raised to the God of Creation, as the inscription upon it stated, and to which only the high priest of that power had access, was a strange receptacle which had held certain cylinders.

The writing upon the receptacle itself was blurred and broken, and the cylinders which it enclosed were themselves preserved in only a fragmentary state. But from what they could make out of the first inscription it seemed, the old men were agreeing, that the receptacle was evidently for votive prayers, probably duplicate copies, which the rite required to be deposited upon the altar till they might be fulfilled.

Evidently the discovery extraordinarily interested the old men for, as Lytton lay on his cot, though he could make out there was commotion all about as the riders approached, these men patiently and intently studied over their texts.

Elsewhere the commotion, as the riders drew into camp, became great. But Lytton, as he waited for the Arab, remembered his promise and composed himself and patiently closed his eyes. He had closed them but an instant, when

suddenly a voice—a soft, gentle, anxious voice rang through him.

As if it had come from his dream and as if fearing it were only the voice of his dream which would mock and deceive him again, he strove not to heed it; but it rang through him again and as he opened his eyes they met Hers gazing down at him.

"They told me at Hillah that you were dying!" she sobbed as his arms closed about her. "They told me at Hillah you were dying; and I rode—we rode, oh, so fast! But you shall not; for you—you are the king of my heart and there can be—there can be no other king! Thou art the king of my heart, dearest, and oh, king, rule—rule forever!"

"Helen!" he cried. "Helen!"

And in the silence of that moment, as they clung together, the voices of the old men came distinctly from the other tent.

"It is clearly, as we thought," one of the voices said, "a receptacle for the du-

plicate copies of votive prayers to the most high gods which were laid there till they might be fulfilled. See. This one is very clear. It is fragmentary, but in the beginning it says:

"The king of my heart is dead; and not as the fickle cry, so do I say, 'Him that was above us is fallen, let another arise in his place!' For my lord and king is dead; and there can be no other. And to him I cry, 'O King! Rule forever!'"

"And see, it says here at the end:

"And that, when he shall return that I may not fail, here do I cry unto Bel and Shamash and Ninna, and unto whatsoever god at that time may be powerful—to give and to take away, to defeat and to prosper—to make me return at last to his love, if it be deserted; and O, Bel and Shamash and Ninna, Merodach, as in the Esagila thou art acknowledged and worshiped, Nebo and Tashmet give him life with me, and provide that as king of my heart, he shall rule forever!"

The Return of The Shepherd

BY EMMA LEE WALTON

Author of "Deceivers Ever," etc.

MRS. ADAMS was what the Reporter called an "Automobile Mother," but he shrugged one shoulder when she took it as a compliment. Nobody else knew just how to take it, for there are all kinds of automobiles; but for the matter of that they never knew how to take anything he said. If he meant she was as handsome and striking as new varnish, as rapid and thoughtless and unregardful as speed, perhaps he was right. Her two boys were not modern, the old fashioned sensitiveness and reserve that possessed them, seeming out of place beside their mother's complacent selfishness. When they stood looking out the front windows they were the picture of loneliness and were exceedingly sorrowful until the Reporter took them up.

Mrs. Bublets' was never a fashionable boarding-place; it was merely a household

where you were supposed to make yourself as much at home as one of the family, pay your board regularly, and not smoke in your rooms. Now and then a member of Society sought the side street as an asylum, demanding the best rooms and breakfast served up-stairs, but remaining only as long as was necessitated by Spring shopping, packing for Europe, or redecorating a home. No one knew Mrs. Adams' reason for being there, and their ignorance was a trial to them. All the various circumlocutions known to curiosity had been tried without avail. Mrs. Adams, serenely courteous but as hard as polished steel, was not to be drawn into a discussion of her affairs, and the matter had to be dropped—in her presence, at least.

At this time the other people at Mrs. Bublets' were her daughter, Blondina

Petrusha, who waited on the table and clattered tins and dishes in the kitchen; the Reporter, whose ambition was centered on being assistant city-editor of the *Gazette*; Miss Antoinette Burke, known as "Tony," who clerked in Meadows'; Mrs. Allison, who belonged to almost every club in the city, and the Three Young Men, dull, dun-colored, and book-keeping. If these three ever had names they lost them early in the day, for no one ever used them. The middle one was the nearest approach to an Individual, because, when he sometimes did say something, he twisted his letters in a comical way, and once he had grown almost angry when the Reporter teased him about the yellow-journal he read every morning, setting it up against the vinegar cruet in a quite clever fashion. The other two never took the trouble to have a paper, but if there was a war or something going on they would steal a read off the headlines of his. The Reporter calculated they had saved eleven dollars and thirty-four cents since he had been there, and when he spoke to them he always extolled the virtue of economy and decried the reckless extravagance of America's youth. They never answered, merely stirring their coffee and blinking down into their plates with becoming modesty, but he did not mind.

The two little boys ate with the household, no matter how many meals Blondina Petrusha took up-stairs to their mother. It was an experiment made in fear and trembling, for Mrs. Bubbles drew the line at dogs, parrots, and children and she was always afraid someone might take offense at their presence. She was troubled at the desertion of her principles, the hauling down of her colors, for had not Mrs. Allison come in with a dog, preceding Mrs. Adams and her boys? So far, however, she had no reason to worry, for the boys were too timid to speak much above a whisper and said "Please" and "Thank you" very prettily. It was doubtful whether they would ever have had "seconds" to anything if it had not been for the Reporter, who piled their plates to overflowing with as much ease as if he had done it all their little lives. He had just the touch of indifference in his manner that was needed to win them, and they adored him.

Almost every evening when he had finished his writing and was leaning back stretching and whistling, the little boys would come tiptoeing up the stairs and knock at the door to be roared at and welcomed effusively. The whistle was always a signal, answered sometimes so suddenly as to suggest crouching in the dim hall; a signal given often before the work was finished, because the Reporter had good ears and could hear the sighs heaved so frequently on the other side of his door, necessitating later hours for his work every night.

Such a room as it was, too! A hat, a knife, and a cocoanut-shell spoon straight from the Philippines; a *sombrero* from Mexico, swords from Spain, gloves from Italy, pipes from everywhere—and everything with a History, marvelous, blood-stained, hair-raising stories, too good to be true. Their wide-eyed wonder his inspiration, as he stood before them balancing a tomahawk, his fertile imagination soared to such heights in picturing Crime punished and Virtue rewarded that he wondered at himself. Then little by little they began to talk, and he learned something of the little crushed lives that knew nothing of love or consideration or anything but neglect. They were pathetically proud of her with her lovely gowns, and were glad of the friends who took her out in their automobiles—away from them all day and every evening—but they did not miss her. Their father had gone away suddenly and they did miss him. With his faculty for reading between the lines the Reporter felt he would have liked their father had he not gone away.

So it came about that, in telling him the joys and sorrows of their days, they confided to his sympathetic ears the almost unbelievable fact that they were to have an automobile-ride themselves on Monday—in a big Red Devil with a loud horn and great big wheels. A lady in a fur coat, who came to see their mother, had said so, and they had scarcely been able to wait to see him and tell him about it. So few people ever thought of them that their joy was unbounded, and

they forgot their reserve as they skipped about his room humming little bits of song to let off steam. They were so excited they ate scarcely any dinner, and they could not sit still long enough to hear stories in his room afterwards—though Monday was three days off. The Reporter helped celebrate with a big box of crackerjack, and all the evening he sang them funny songs to the tune of his old guitar. Danny joined in the choruses as soon as he could catch on to them, but Ted turned somersaults and hopped and laughed like some wild little thing in the woods. He was too small to realize, as Danny did, that Things were beginning to happen, and they to live. It was a joyous evening, if ever there were one.

The long hours of the days dragged by, helped by the radiant evenings that put their host wretchedly behind in his work, but made them beamingly content with the whole of their little world, and Monday dawned. In spite of terrifying fears and dread prognostications to the contrary, it was a sunny day with a glorious blue sky, ideal in all respects for an auto-ride—above all for the First one in your short history. Danny and Ted washed their faces two times before breakfast and three times afterward and then waited, with every nerve in their small bodies tingling with excitement. Their mother was asleep as usual when they dressed, so Dan, who always buttoned Ted up, was undecided how they should be garbed. Coming to the delightful conclusion that Sunday-best was none too sacred for the grand occasion, he took out their white shoes, suits, and caps, and proceeded to garb the littlest boy. It was no easy task, as Ted wriggled dreadfully, and there were lots of hooks and buttons, but the Reporter looked in on them and helped with the finishing touches. His hands were big, but somehow they worked very fast and never bungled anything. Danny said he was like his father that way, and sighed.

Breakfast was a mere ceremony that morning, necessarily long and tedious, but something that must be gone through with—like shaking hands or going to see one's aunts. They talked a great deal of the ride, led on by the Reporter, listen-

ing the while for their mother's step overhead, or the chugging of a Red Devil in the road. The lady was to come at eight, so right after breakfast they took their stand at the window and watched. The Reporter waited with them, and Blondina Petrusha dusting the mantel over and over, and the Three Young Men who never hurried at their meals, and Miss Burke and Mrs. Bubbles—all eager to see their pleasure.

In time the chugging came down the street and the great panting, fascinating monster stood outside Mrs. Bubbles' door. It was so shiny, so gorgeous, so smooth and swift, the little boys clapped their hands in ecstasy, and reached for the white caps and white coats, ready to go. Then there was a quick swish of skirts in the hall, the front door closed softly, and their mother hurried down the little walk. As she stepped in and greeted her friend, Danny seized the Reporter's arm in an agony of apprehension.

"They can't find us!" he wailed. "Oh, they don't see where we are!"

The Reporter knocked sharply on the glass with his knife, and the beaming, radiant ladies turned to them with gay smiles. Mrs. Adams kissed her hand prettily to the two little boys, and then giving the word to the chauffeur, they vanished out of their sight like fairies on a magic carpet. For a moment the boys stood stunned, and then poor little Ted sank in a corner and began to cry, sobbingly. Danny shoved his hands into his pockets as far as they would go and turned manfully about, smiling with quivering lips.

"I think it's going to be a lovely day," he said to the Reporter. "I don't know when I've seen a more beautiful morning."

Feeling perhaps that there must be a breakdown, and unwilling that it should be his own, the Reporter picked Danny up with a sweep of his arm and disappeared up the stairs. What happened up there no one ever knew, but when Ted left the indignant gathering below, he found his brother seated on a trunk, kicking his heels against the side and eating marshmallows with a sort of sacred solemnity. Fortunately he arrived before the end of the box.

A few minutes later the Reporter came down to telephone. First he 'phoned the office that he could not be down before four o'clock—hanging up the receiver immediately—and then he called up a garage and ordered a Red Devil and a chauffeur at once. Blondina Petrusha, who always listened when people used the telephone, carried the news to the others, and when the Reporter came past the door they hailed him with offers of assistance. At first he declined, but then he changed his mind and accepted on behalf of the boys, allowing them to put into his hat whatsoever they pleased. The middle young man looked up from his paper long enough to contribute a dollar, under the impression it was for a raffle, and each of the other two gave ten cents. The Reporter put the dimes beside Tony Burke's half-dollar and smiled his funny crooked smile.

"The Relief Committee thanks you, ladies and gentlemen," he said, his hand on his heart. "We shall make a point to speak of you often as we eat your crackerjack and peanuts. I must go and tell my little charges or C.O.D.s, or whatever they are."

The others had gone when the excited trio came down the stairs a little later, but Mrs. Bublets and Blondina Petrusha stood in the doorway to see them go. Ted was wild with delight, but in Danny's pleasure there was still the lack left by his disappointment, and the Reporter knew he must tax his ingenuity to the utmost to make the day as perfect as it might have been.

He felt it a pity to have two seats to himself, but the day was the boys', and neither of the ladies they had left on the porch could be other than a drawback to them. Some other day, perhaps—and he smiled ruefully as he calculated the time to payday.

With the two little boys seated beside the chauffeur, where they were within reaching distance of the delightfully discordant horn, they sailed away, handkerchiefs waving, voices cheering, horn honking, a radiant, joyful load. On and on, now beside the Lake, now near some bear-full woods, now on the boulevards, listening to the Reporter's explanation of

why everything was and how it came to be, and cheering ragmen and autoes with genial impartiality.

In a funny little Chinese restaurant, down-town, they had a lunch, but they were so enchanted with the decorations and the comical waiters they almost forgot what they were eating. They pretended to talk Chinese, and the Reporter answered them with such wonderful gravity that they were charmed with their own invention. It was all so wonderful, so deliriously exciting!

Then suddenly, in the midst of the festivities, Danny slid out of his chair and ran to a man seated in the far corner of the balcony, throwing his arms about his neck in a mighty hug. Ted followed at once with little squeals of delight, and the Reporter found himself alone amid the ruins of his luncheon. A curiously jealous feeling possessed him at first, and then he laughed softly to himself. The little boys tugging at the coat and hands of their new friend they had so fervently embraced, were bringing him to their own table to sit him down while they finished their cream.

"It's my papa," Danny announced, remembering his manners. "And he's the Reporter. He's on a paper, Daddy, and writes about fires and he's got all kinds of pipes. Oh, Daddy, he got us an automobile-ride!"

The Reporter looked him over as they shook hands. The man was large and forceful, quick-tempered perhaps, but kindly, and showing not the least bit of the weakness he had looked for in him. The Reporter decided swiftly that he liked him.

"I wish I were in your shoes," the stranger said wistfully. "What are you doing with my boys?"

"We've been having a time," the Reporter responded gayly. "Things went crooked this morning and had to be straightened out, that's all."

The man's face clouded. "Is—is she good to—"

The Reporter noting Danny's attention diverted from the ice-cream, interrupted suddenly.

"Mrs. Bublets is a dandy," he laughed. "And I do so enjoy having the boys with

me when everybody else is out. They come to see me every evening, which is very kind as I am a lonely duffer."

"Yes, and then he puts us to bed," chimed Danny. "Gee! he's great at buttonholes!"

The man swallowed hard, and queer white lines showed around his mouth, but he said nothing.

"They're the best boys I ever knew," the Reporter said gravely. "When we have pillow-fights they stop just when I tell them to. They had a good father."

Danny and Ted were solely attentive to the ice-cream, now, and the man watched them with a strange expression in his eyes.

"They're fond of you," he said jealously. "I was afraid they'd forgotten me."

"Then why run the risk while there is yet time?" the Reporter asked softly. "They want to give that love somewhere—don't you value it?"

"Value it?" cried the stranger. "It's eating my heart out, man!"

"Then why—"

Their father turned on him sharply.

"Who are you to dictate to me?" he cried hoarsely. "You don't know what it is day after day. It's nothing short of he—"

"Well," interrupted the Reporter calmly, "I think I'd be willing to go through that famous place for them. The more years pass the nearer they will be to you—or someone else. Have you met their mother's friends?"

"I have had that pleasure."

"I can guarantee that she will let you go your way and be with you as little as possible. You will have the boys and she will not mind. And if you leave them to chance kindnesses—"

He stopped.

"Danny," he said, cheerily, "will you tell your father the story of the big red pipe?"

Danny laid down his spoon and swallowed hastily.

"Once there was a shepherd," he began, "and a shepherd takes care of sheep—"

"And lambs," supplemented Ted.

"Yes, little teentsy lambs. And he

smoked a red pipe and thought and thought. And there was wolves and there was foxes and not even a dog. And the shepherd he went away to have some fun, and dance—"

"No," the man said in a low voice, "not that."

"Yes, daddy," the boy insisted, "and a lot of wolves and foxes they ate up the sheeps and the little teentsy lambs—"

"All up," said Ted, eagerly.

"And all there was left of anything was the big red pipe, for the shepherd he runned away. And that's all."

The ice-cream drew him again and the two men sat in silence for a long, long time.

"I'm not good at saying things," the Reporter said huskily, "but if they were mine I'd be so humbly thankful I—I—"

"But her?"

"Isn't it worth it? Somehow I don't like to go back without them to my room and they are not my flesh and blood. Nothing should stand in my way were I you, for I could not stand it."

"God help me!" cried the stranger. "I can't!"

He stretched his arm over the table and the two men clasped hands, seeing a little way into a future of love and devotion between father and sons. And the handclasp was a promise.

The Reporter was late coming back from the office and they kept his dinner hot for him. Tony Burke and Blondina Petrusha waited to visit with him and ask about the ride, as the boys had not yet returned.

"Where are they?" Tony Burke asked anxiously. "Did you have an accident?"

"No, I don't believe in accidents," he said seriously. "Mr. Adams will bring the boys. By the way, will you be kind enough to lend me the wash-boiler, Miss Bubbles?"

"The wash-boiler?"

"The wash-boiler," he continued rising. "They tell me I'm going to get an awful blowing up from the city-editor to-morrow and I'd like some armor."

"Isn't he killing?" cried Blondina Petrusha as the door closed. "I don't believe he ever had a serious thought in his life."



Toward the Red Hills

BY DAVE KING

ILLUSTRATED BY WILL CRAWFORD

SMOKY" BELL, cowpuncher, bad man, killer, was talking to himself as he rode into a shallow pool in the all-but-dry bed of Dog Soldier Creek and dismounted, half-way to his boot-tops in the thick, reddish, alkali solution which must answer for water even though it drew and blistered the mouth and throat and poisoned the stomach.

To talk at all was to talk to himself, for, excepting the fagged pinto, struggling with a short hackamore to get his head eye-deep into the slimy, acrid stuff in which he stood, and a few panting, half-blinded lizards that had come down to the pool to escape the burning sands, there was none to listen.

For this very reason Dog Soldier, a low-browed, uncertain "vanisher," which set its course through a desert of sand, alkali, and red gypsum, seemed to loom before the man's sunken, half-dead eyes like a moss-bedded Cumberland tangle, and the foul-smelling, stifling pool to leap up and pull him down into cool, sweet, safe depths.

A few hours before, "Smoky" Bell had given Lone Cottonwood her first real baptism of six-shooter fire, thereby adding materially to his reputation for "smokin'-em-up" and further justifying his *soubriquet*. He had raised the town to the dignity incident to the possession of a graveyard; he had left in his reverse

wake enough work for all the doctors in No Mans Land, and enough blighting, scorching rage in the breasts of the uninjured citizens to account for three years of drought in a rain-belt. He had "shot-up" Lone Cottonwood, not with any particular malice towards the town or, for that matter, any of her citizens; it was purely incidental to the "gittin'" of "Butch" Williams. The town, the town marshal, the young English "gilligan," the faro-dealer, and Lady Lil's foot had merely gotten in the way. After the last shot, taken on the fly at the "Lone Star's" illuminated sign, he had ridden—ridden—ridden, hour after hour, in grim silence except for an occasional word of caution or encouragement to the flying pinto—and he *had* to talk.

"Hell of a day for a git-away," he said, running his fingers through his matted, sun-reddened hair, "but I jest had to snuff out 'Butch's' light sometime, and I don't reckon no real fi'tin' man ever backed off 'cause the weather wasn't right."

The words sounded as if they had been

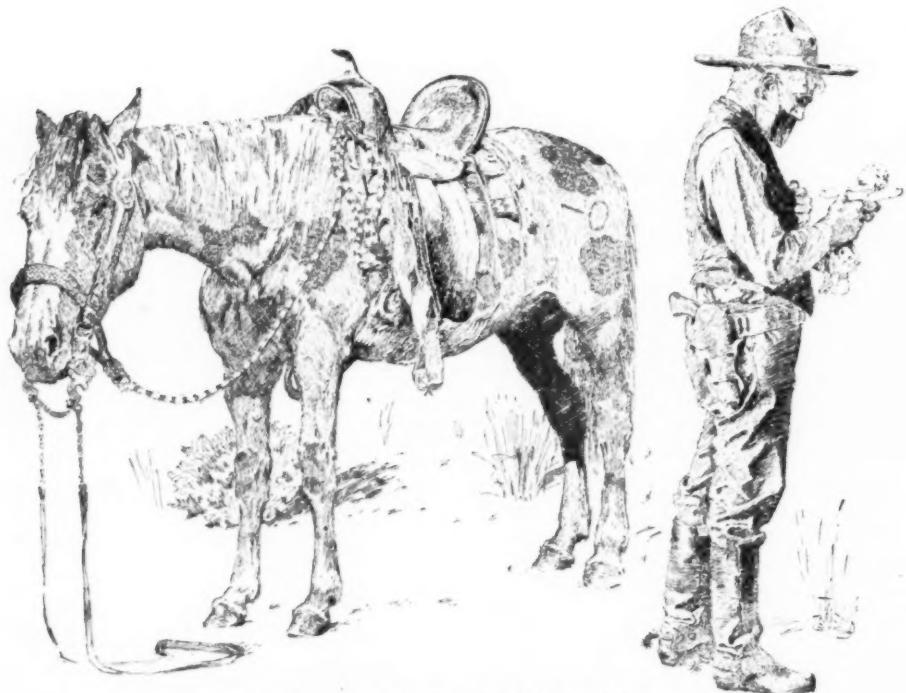
crowded through his teeth by his tongue and had not touched his lips. He looked back over the low bank, across the Dog Soldier flats toward Lone Cottonwood, saw no signs of pursuit, and then turned his face eastward where, thirty miles away, lay the Red Hills; beyond them the Kiowa country and safety.

"If you can hold out to make it to them hills to-night, Paint, we're saved; leastwise, I am, but I'm feared you wont be much of a equine when it's over with," he said, running a hand down over one of the pinto's quirt-welted hips. "Seem to like that truck, Paint. Reckon I'll jest naturally have to tackle it myself," said the man, shrugging his shoulders and setting his jaws.

He had formed his hat-brim into a scoop and was on the point of dipping up some of the liquid for his own crackin' throat, when he realized that the horse was drinking too deeply.

"I aint stingy with this here akerfortis, little hoss, but you're exposed to founders right now."

And he forced the animal out of the



"Little gal in that outfit, and she's lost her dolly"



"I want You t' do somethin' for this pore little gal!"

pool, tied him to a scraggy plum-bush, loosened the cinches, and returned to the water's edge. Then he noticed for the first time the footprints of a child in the wet sand around the pool.

"Little kid been trompin' 'round here," was his casual comment.

A flap of leather, cut from the leg of a discarded boot and tied with a greasy buckskin string at the back of the neck, hung over the man's mouth and masked it. Raising this, he disclosed the source of the crimson splotches which plastered the front of his shirt. Part of the upper lip had been shot away.

Forced finally to surrender to the demands of his burning throat, he took a mouthful of the water, worried it down as if it were so much dry sand, and returned to the pinto, grinding his teeth.

"First good look at you I've had, little feller, and I want to say, not in any flat-terin' way, that you're shore some hoss.

Owner had a mighty likely saddle, too. Backin' out of an explodin' saloon an' cross a gun-lighted street to a black corral shore leaves some oncertainty for a gent that's selectin' of a git-away outfit under them circumstances, and I'm 'bout ready to believe that the somebody or somethin' that steered me in the dark to you has got more work for me to do 'sides puttin' away that low-down coyote 'Butch.' 'Bar-Circle' hoss, eh? Been calling you 'Paint'—reckon that's yer name. Ort to be now, for yer pore little barrel's shore painted some. Sorry I had to spur you thataway."

While talking to the pinto he had been readjusting the saddle-blankets and cinching up.

"Reckon I owe you somethin' I can't never pay, Paint," he continued. "But most men owe more to hosses an' dogs and things thataway than they do to their feller men."

He walked over to the pool, wet a blue bandanna handkerchief, which he placed in the crown of his hat, allowed the pinto one final short gulp of water, led him up the bank, took a long survey of the flats, then turned and rode eastward toward the red country.

Fifty yards from the creek ran the Elliott trail—now a wagon-road—the highway to the Panhandle. Close by the wheelway he came upon the smouldering ashes of a camp-fire—a one-wagon camp, deserted that morning.

"Mover goin' south to the Panhandle country," was his mental comment. "Poor devils! They're goin' down there where it's dryer 'an this—so dry you have to prime yer mouth to spit. Hello! Well, I'll be—"

At his horse's feet, half hidden in the dry weeds, lay a doll—a home-made rag doll—upon the shoulders of which, fastened by a few threads, sat, in a disconsolate way, a china head. The body was of uncertain shape, ragged and dirty, but the head showed signs of many washings. The black paint that had once been lustrous hair was worn away in many places, and the crimson that had once, for a brief time, given her a sweet, rose mouth, was gone entirely.

"Little gal in that outfit and she's lost her dolly. Probably breakin' her heart over it right now," mused the bad man, looking, with half-resolve in his eyes, southward down the heat-glimmering road.

He got off, picked up the doll, placed it inside his shirt, remounted, and after another survey which took in both south and west, rode on.

For a mile the pinto picked his way through the sagebrush and over the sand-dunes, without urging by spur, quirt, or word. The bad man was silent and grim again, but he no longer took hasty glances behind, nor did he look ahead toward the Red Hills. His hands were clinched tightly over the saddle-horn and his chin swung from side to side on his blood-stained shirt-front, obedient to the pinto's movements. "Smoky" Bell was thinking, but his thoughts were not of No Man's Land. He had forgotten Lone Cottonwood and her enraged citizens;

forgotten "Butch" Williams and the long feud; forgotten even the joy, so recently upon him, that leaps in the bad man's heart when the six-shooters are belching and the crowd is scurrying for shelter.

For the first time in many years he had allowed himself to go back to the Eastern farm-home of his boyhood. He was back there now with his little sister, and their playmates. The clumps of sagebrush within range of his down-turned eyes formed themselves into play-houses as he passed, and in them all he saw dolls—some waxen and beautiful, some like the dirty, ragged thing in his shirt. He remembered how once, when a boy, he had plunged into a deep, swiftly running creek to recover just such a doll for his little flaxen-haired sweetheart, and he wondered if the little "gal" over there on the hot road would be as happy as she had been to clasp again her dolly. He took the ragged doll from his shirt, laid it on his arm and crooned to it, as in boyhood he had seen baby-mothers do.

Then the old haunting thing—the thing that he thought he had drowned in his wild career of dissipation and outlawry—leaped out of the sand and throttled him. His mother, long dead of worry and grief for her run-away boy, and his old father, still struggling on—perhaps in sore need of a son to lean upon, he did not know—walked beside the pinto and looked up at him.

The pinto heard the groan and stopped.

The bad man raised himself to his full height in the stirrups, threw the rag doll far into the sagebrush and settled back, his face buried in his hands. A lizard, reassured by the silence, crept out on a leaning branch of sage and eyed the motionless pair.

There was a new light in the bad man's eyes when he returned to the tired pinto, with the ragged doll again resting in the turn of his arm.

"Paint," he said, "me and you are goin' on a long mosey further than the Kiowa, but first do you reckon you can stand it to swing far enough out of the way to ketch that outfit and still git us safe into them hills? They wont pass



A rattlesnake threw itself at the horse's legs

Brokenleg Holes 'count o' the water, and I reckon that little gal is feelin' powerful bad by now."

He had mounted and turned southward. The pinto quickened his pace and "Smoky" Bell, bad man and killer, himself pursued by half the citizens of Lone Cottonwood, was pursuing an emigrant-wagon to restore to some little girl a rag

doll that she had lost in the weeds beside the trail.

He took a course that would bring him to the road near Brokenleg Holes and again lapsed into silence. When the ground grew firmer he urged the horse into a lope, but the pace could not be maintained and it was mid-afternoon, still blistering hot, when he struck the

road, a mile from where he knew the "movers" were camped. He swung into the road, but almost instantly pulled up and fixed his gaze on one of the dust-filled wheel-ruts.

"Darn me if them there aint barefoot baby-tracks an' they're goin'—! It's that little gal trailin' back fer her dolly! She's started out to cover ten miles over a scorchin', blisterin' road, under an egg-cookin', lizard-frying sun, to git a dolly that's right here in my shirt! She shore did want it some bad." And half-unconsciously, he turned to follow the little tracks.

He knew she could not possibly be farther away than the little draw which showed a few hundred yards back, but he crowded the pinto to the greatest speed left in him. He had just caught sight of a bare-headed child when, like a flash, a great club of a rattlesnake threw itself out at the passing horse's

legs. The man pulled up to see if the horse had been struck and having satisfied himself on that score, regarded the wriggling roll of rusty black and gray:

"I'll get you comin' back, pard. A .45's too precious to waste and I aint got time to beat you to death now. Jerusalem, what a head! Got pizen enough in it to kill a herd of steers. Rusty and old and blind as a—"

"Gawd!"

In the rut, immediately in front of where the snake had lain coiled and was now recoiling, were many more baby-tracks.

The bad man's spurs bit deep into the pinto's sides, and half a minute later he held in his arms a very dirty and badly frightened little girl, flaxen-haired and perhaps five, and was examining one of her chapped and dust-blackened little legs, down which coursed two small streams of blood from two tiny black

holes just below the knee. He was holding aloft the rag doll when he rushed upon her, but she was too frightened to recognize it. Now she held it close to her little breast and was crooning over it. Her first cry of joy had broken upon the bad man's heart like an avalanche upon a village.

"Snakes nor nothin' else could stop you with that dolly callin' to you from the weeds back there," sobbed the man who had "shot-up" Lone Cottonwood, as he took from his pocket a knife. In an instant he had slashed from his shirt the band for a tourniquet and was adjusting it. The child looked on with wonder in her great blue eyes, unmindful of the tightening band, for the numbness was creeping upon her.

The bad man picked up his knife, gathered the flesh where the cruel fangs had sunk deep, then looked into the child's sun-broiled face. She was still crooning to her



He slashed from his shirt the band

dolly, but very faintly now, oppressed with a sickness she did not understand. There was a twitching and a whitening about the little mouth and the eyes, though they smiled up into the bad man's face, were taking on an unnatural brightness.

"Smoky" Bell gave a great gulp, rose to his knees, and lifted his face to the blazing sun. The black leather flap extended at an angle from his nose, and in a dimmer light, would have made him look like a bearded Mussulman praying from a housetop. The man who made it smoky in Lone Cottonwood was going to pray.

"I'm a bad man, Mister God, I've shot-'em-up from Dodge to the Brazos. I'm wanted bad right now in Cottonwood, and this is the first time I ever hollered. Reckon I aint got no right to speak to You, but I want You to do something and do it quick for this here pore, innercent little gal. She's got it comin' to her, fer one o' Yer ornery venomous critters done it, an' there wa'n't a lick o' sense in it nohow. Help me out with this job and I'll go to hell fer You in a minnit, if You say so. A—men."

He turned again to the now almost unconscious child, gathered anew the flesh of the blackened limb, and slashed deep, almost to the bone.

"It hurt, honey, but there wa'n't no other way lessen God took a hand, and I don't reckon He heerd me," said the bad man, as the child gave a feeble cry.

The next instant he had torn away the leather flap and had fastened his smarting lips to the gaping wound. The child was still now and the rag doll lay neglected and forgotten in the dust of the wagon-rut. The pinto dozed and, at intervals, nodded fitfully as his tired limbs threatened to collapse.

"All pizen," muttered the bad man but if he felt the sharp sting in his own open wounds he gave no sign.

For ten minutes he toiled at his terrible task, then he put down the limp and apparently lifeless form, and mounting his horse rode swiftly back to the author of it all, the blind fiend by the roadside, still coiled and ready to strike at any approaching sound. Nor did he seem to

sense that his own wound smarted and burned like fire.

"I want yer stummick, you murderer. The Injuns say there's a pizen cure in it for your own use when you git so riled you bite yourself, and I've come to git it fer that little gal you tried to murder."

Back to the babe by the roadside, he rode, quirting the pinto as he had not thought of doing when all the guns of Lone Cottonwood were spitting after him. She had not moved, and he almost threw himself from the horse in his anxiety to learn if the little heart still held out against the creeping poison. He could discover occasional flutterings, like straggling shots, and took new hope.

"While this here snake-stummick poultice is a-workin', honey, I'll try to git you to yer ma," he said, "but yer mighty still and white!"

He found the child's parents asleep beside their ramshackle wagon in the shade of an improvised sun-break, unconscious that their little one had strayed from the camp. Their wretched belongings were strewn about in a manner that betokened utter shiftlessness. Two miserable, indescribably poor horses snipped at the scanty dried grass and looked reproachfully toward the camp. No wonder, thought "Smoky" Bell, that the little girl loved her dolly; greater wonder that she had had one to love.

The woman, sallow, slattern, work-weary, heard the bad man's story of the child and wrung her hands helplessly. The father, a lank, stoop-shouldered Missouri-bottom ague-product was also equally helpless. They might not be able to restore the child even if the poison had left it possible. There was no medicine, not even a drop of whisky.

Would he not stay and save her for them, they implored.

The bad man looked at the still unconscious child, walked to the other side of the wagon, removed the loose leather flap, bound his handkerchief around his now black and swollen mouth and returned to a task which he knew would be long and which he prayed in his heart he might complete before "they" came. Only once did he weaken and ask the wondering man to go to the high ground



The woman, sallow, slattern, wrung her hands helplessly

and look back over Dog Soldier Flats. The report gave him new strength. He needed it, for something strange was gripping at his heart; his face was becoming numb and his head sat heavily on his shoulders as if it were a ball and liable to roll off. Still he worked on, chafing the little limbs and body, coaxing the heart to resume its dominion.

It was almost sundown when he arose and staggered toward the pinto. A few minutes before the babe had opened her eyes, clear and natural again, smiled at him, and murmured, "Dolly." He had placed the ragged doll on her breast, closed her arm over it, made certain that the pulse was returning, and turned away, the supreme victor in the greatest battle of his tumultuous life.

"Shore must 'a' been a friend shootin'

out of the dark that time," was the bad man's thought. "Do you reckón that prayin' helped?" he added half aloud.

But this thing that was on him! The numbness seemed to be in his shoulders and arms now and a peculiar sickness was creeping over him. The handkerchief seemed to be cutting and extending the lines of his mouth toward his ears.

The joy-dumb woman clung to the bad man's shoulder and mutely begged that he stay and let them minister to his needs. She tried to look beneath the handkerchief, but he turned his face toward the man, who was holding one of his hands in both his own.

"Yer plum played out; so's yer hoss. 'Sides yer sick an' hurt," argued the man. "Say," he continued, "I'll be with you in the fi'tin'."

The bad man could not speak, but he made him understand that there would be no "fi'tin'."

Then he dragged himself into the saddle and rode away toward where lay the Red Hills, and beyond them the Kiowa country and safety, and beyond that—still as far away as they were at Dog Soldier.

As he passed the wagon he heard a weak but clear little voice say:

"Nice man brought back my dolly."

Half a mile from the wagon the ground began to fall away from the pinto's feet and he seemed to be riding on the peak of a great, steep roof which broke far below into a green plain dotted here and there by trees and white houses, and cut by a deep, swift-running creek, on the bank of which he saw a flaxen-haired little girl screaming in terror at the fate of her dolly, carried away on its tide. There was a flash, and the green plain seemed to have passed through a great furnace. The steep roof dropped to the level of the plain and at the pinto's feet, half-hidden in the dry weeds beside a dusty road, lay a rag doll, with a china head.

A little farther on the pinto stopped and turned upon his rider an inquiring gaze, unable to understand the dragging reins, and the swaying, surging motion of the man in the saddle. The bad man, aroused, sat erect and turned his face toward the "mover's" camp. Though his vision was clear now he could not see it, for a little rise of ground intervened, but half way back to where it should be, he saw, coming toward him rapidly, a body of horsemen—the citizens of Lone Cottonwood.

The sun was going down.

The bad man turned, tore the handkerchief from his mouth and laughed with a sound like a splitting tree-trunk. The hand that had been clutching the saddlehorn dropped to his side. For a moment there was no movement. Then "Smoky" Bell, killer, bad man, turned his face again to the sky, no longer blazing with heat-wrath, and said in clear tones:

"God, I'm here, and I want to make good on that proposition back there in the road."

He lurched forward, fell heavily, and lay still on the cooling sand.

Near the Wind

BY BARONESS VON HUTTON

Author of "Pam," "Pam Decides," etc

ILLUSTRATED BY FREDERICK J. MULHAUPT

BI DDULPH NETTLEFOLD leaned back in his chair, frowned at a spot of ink on his thumb-nail, yawned, and then very slowly, with the physical laziness produced by prolonged mental work, gathered up the closely-written sheets and locked them away in the big leather box that stood awaiting them.

He had written for three hours and a half, and was contented with his work.

He was one of those writers in whom many people do not believe, but who nevertheless very profitably exist; who

write irregularly, as something unnamed within them chooses to dictate.

No regular two hours after breakfast, three after lunch, for him; but long wastes of sterile idleness when the very sight of a pen turned him nearly sick, when his imagination hibernated, and then a sudden rush to the writing-table, a frenzied grab for the pen, and away he started writing for hours without moving from his place, his thin yellow hand rushing over the paper as if propelled by electricity.

For when he read the work done in this way he discovered, almost as if they had been written by someone else, the meaty good things, the cynical flashes of wit, and the wisdom which, combined and woven together by one of the deftest brains of our day, made his books the masterpieces they undoubtedly were.

"The writing condition," he used to say, "is for me only to be compared to a state of hypnotism. Once started, I really hardly know what I write, and never, until I read it over, how I have expressed it."

But this he said, being in a way a wise man, only to one or two people, for he knew the scornful disbelief of the average mind for what it does not understand.

Nettlefold's books being what they are, are widely read and much discussed. French people consider them the nearest thing in English literature to the Gallic ideal; Germany calls them—and rightly—*hoch-modern*; Spaniards and Danes chuckle over them in Spanish and Danish.

Now this means fame, but Mr. Podsnap does not at all approve of them.

The young person must not read them, for they are not written for her, and all Podsnappia rolls its eyes with horror when "The Beginning of the End," or "He Who Will Not When He May," or "Mr. Truscott" are mentioned.

The book on which Nettlefold was working that November was called "Near the Wind," and as he mentally reviewed the chapters he had just written—meanwhile daintily rubbing the ink-spot from his thumb with a bit of pumice-stone, and subsequently making what his trans-channel admirers call "*un bout de toilette*"—the great man smiled at the thought of poor Podsnappia!

It was very near the wind indeed, the new book, but so deliciously well done that a positive shiver of joy went down his spine as he carefully brushed his thin hair and thought about that last chapter.

Then, still smiling, he went downstairs to the library, where he knew that adoration and tea awaited him.

His hostess, Lady Lawless, was a great comfort to him. She knew how to make

him very comfortable in her thick-walled old house, and cannily, in her mediocre brain, she had long since come to the conclusion that writers do not, necessarily, require subtle literary conversations as a mental nourishment—this very common mistake frequently leads otherwise quite harmless and pleasant women into a perfect labyrinth of idiocy—so she allowed him to talk of whatever he liked, which usually was of anything under the heavens but books and writing.

With a most flattering sigh of comfort, the great man sank into the big chair known as "his," and leaned back.

"I shall want three cups of tea," he said in that queer, slow, hoarse way of his, "and—several muffins."

The three women laughed with pleasure.

"I knew you'd be late," Lady Lawless returned, "so I only rang for tea a minute ago, and we have had ours, and here is a tea-pot all for you, and—the water boils!"

"Awful."

The two girls looked at him curiously, as he lazily watched the making of the tea.

Lady Lawless had no daughters, and these two young things had come from opposite ends of England to visit her. They had both arrived three days before, and were both, apparently, still thrilled by the excitement of living under the same roof with Biddulph Nettlefold.

And he, drinking his tea, consuming his three muffins—for the man ate enormously while he was working—understood this and smiled his queer, crooked smile as he watched them watching him.

Suddenly Pansy Petre, the younger of the two, broke the silence in a most unexpected way.

"Well," she burst out with an affectation of affability to which the expression of her delightful face gave the lie, "how is the book coming on?"

Lady Lawless stared at her, and then she and Biddulph looked at each other and laughed.

"The book," he croaked, handing back his cup with "yes, please" in his eye, "is coming on finely. It is going to be—outrageous."



"Well," Pansy burst out, "how is the book coming on?"

Jane Lydden, the other girl, giggled, and Lady Lawless poured out.

"Is it going to be as bad as 'He Who Will Not?'" persisted Pansy, sitting on the club-fender and fixing him with a steady gaze.

Good outlines, he noticed, show themselves well against a background of blazing wood.

After a pause, during which he stirred his tea thoughtfully, he answered her.

"Did you ever read 'Mother Goose'? Well, this new book is to 'He Who Will Not' what it is to 'Mother Goose.' It is a most awful book."

His cadaverous, and curiously impulsive face, wrinkled slowly into a smile of infinite Orientalism as he watched his questioner.

"H-have you," he went on, drawling as no one else would, in these hasty times, be allowed to drawl, "read all my books?"

The blood he drew came only to the surface of her agitated young face, but he had drawn it, and watched her blush with delight.

"No," she answered, "I—I never read any of 'em, of course."

"Then how did you k-know?"

It was little Jane Lydden who answered, breathlessly but bravely.

"Everyone knows, don't they, Lady Lawless? And, of course, we have heard 'em talked about."

"W-would you be so kind as to give me a bit of sugar; I always want each succeeding cup sweeter than the last. Thanks. Oh, so you hear 'em talked about. That must be very bad for you."

"Oh, why?" cried Lady Lawless. "The plots are—fairly presentable, it's only the—the expression of things that is—"

"Corrupting?" he suggested, his eyes quite hidden under the wrinkled lids.

Pansy burst out laughing. "What a delicious word! I say, Mr. Nettlefold, if the plots are all right, do tell us the plot of this last one. We'll never tell; we'll give you our word of honor. Oh, please do!"

Lady Lawless, who, contrary to all laws of expectation, was not, and never had been in love with her distinguished friend, leaned back with a hand screen

between her and the fire and watched, well-pleased, the relaxation of the lion. He set down his cup, lighted a cigaret, and made himself comfortable before he answered the daring creature's request.

"All right. Word of honor, please."

The two girls gave it in unison.

"Then—the title is 'Near the Wind.' Do you like it?"

"Oh yes."

"And the plot—well the plot is highly respectable. There is a City-man and his well-born wife. He is most exultant; loves her; gives her everything she wants; has no v—faults at all. Lucky woman, eh?"

Jane leaned forward, her little delicate face aglow in the firelight. "Oh yes!"

"And you, Miss Petre?"

Pansy shrugged her shoulders. "Go on, please," she returned, deftly.

He laughed and went on.

"Then—Now don't be alarmed," waving his hand, "there is another man. Rather a beast, this second chap. Gambles, and is—a horrid person generally. Only—he and the City-man's wife were brought up in the same way; sucked in the same idea—germs from their Bond-street bottles—and are bored by the same things. W-which is a tie," he added thoughtfully.

"Now then, guess what happened?"

Jane shook her head, puzzled but interested.

Pansy, unbecomingly but forcefully, thrust out her under lip and frowned.

"They fall in love with each other—and the City-man finds out—and—"

Nettlefold laughed. "Yes—and—"

"They bolt," decided Jane with authority.

Pansy shook her head. "No, they don't, but they *nearly* do, and that's what the title means!"

"Wrong," Nettlefold declared, lighting a fresh cigaret. "Don't you wish you knew?"

For a few minutes they bombarded him with questions, which met with no response beyond that of the most enigmatical smile ever seen on an Occidental face, and then, quite closing his eyes he remarked quietly,



Jane's was the first plunge but she missed the key

"And if you could just open a green leather box on my table, you'd know. Isn't life a tragedy?"

"What would you do to us if we did go and look?"

Pansy's dark face wore a most entrancing grin as she put the outrageous question.

"Do? Nothing. Only this happens to be the key," touching a little gold one on his watch-chain.

"That is not fair. You know we *can't*."

"Oh, Pansy," murmured the troubled Jane.

Nettlefold smoked for a moment with those maddening curtains over his eyes, and then took the key from his chain and put it into a bowl of dried rose-leaves at his elbow.

"I dine out," he said, his voice almost inaudible for hoarseness, "and so does Lady Lawless. Here's the key. And to you, young lady with the wicked eyebrows," he added, suddenly staring at Pansy with an intensity that nearly sent her backwards into the fire, "I'll tell something else. That book is founded on fact, and as it stands, tells a good bit of my own story—the story you have been so wondering about yesterday and to-day. It's so personal that I'm going to change and cut that part out, so when it's published my secrets shall still be my secrets. But as the manuscript now stands, it reveals—all my most bloody secrets. Where are you dining, Lady Lawless?"

"In Grosvenor Street. And you?"

"At the Savage. An American genius has just written a novel about the society of New York, and I am to meet him. It will," he added, croakingly, "be a great privilege."

Three hours later the two girls sat together at their tête-à-tête dinner. Neither of them was out, but each one wore a slightly décolleté white frock; Pansy's, it was obvious, the result of home talent, though simple enough; Jane's, though simple in design, as plainly bearing the stamp of some trans-channel artist.

Both girls were a little silent and preoccupied, for both were thinking excitedly of the key in the rose-bowl, and when the servants had withdrawn, they burst out simultaneously, "Oh, Pansy!"

"Oh, Jane!"

There was a palpitating pause, and then sixteen-year-old Pansy went on:

"There'd be no harm in looking at the key."

Jane gasped. "Oh, Pansy," she repeated, helplessly.

Pansy laughed. She always grew bolder when Jane funk'd a thing—the always dating from three days back, when they had first met. "I'm going to see that key," she declared firmly, rising, "before this wicked world is an hour older!"

The rose-bowl was very broad and fat, and filled with a delightful concoction of flowers and spices. First the conspirators bent their heads and sniffed.

"Very fragrant," announced Jane, "but—I smell the bones of Englishmen."

"Let's draw lots as to which is to take the first plunge?"

"Right oh."

Jane's was the first plunge, but she missed the key. Pansy did the same, and then Jane repeated her vain effort.

"Jane Lydden, what if he took it out!" cried Miss Petre excitedly. "No; I'm sure he didn't do that. Try again, Peter Pansy."

And this time the little gilt key came out of its hiding-place, and was gravely inspected.

"Why, it's just like the key of my dispatch-box," cried Jane. "Exactly! One of those things from Asprey's! Oh, Pansy, how easy it would be. He almost said we might."

"No, he didn't. But we could if we wanted to. Oh Jane!"

"Oh, Pansy."

Nettlefold came in early. The dinner had bored him. Besides, it was a chilly evening, and he wanted to sit by his fire and read.

When he reached his sitting-room and switched on the light, he was greeted by two low giggles, and there, sitting on the rug by his fire, were the two girls.

"Girls!"

"Are you not glad to see us?" asked Pansy.

"Enchanted, but—"

"But surprised. We wanted to return



"Just a *little* like Madame Bovary," remarked Pansy

you the key. We feared you might feel nervous about it. Here it is."

Rising, she handed him the tiny object.

Jane Lydden sat silently watching, her smooth brown hair quite gold in the strong light.

Biddulph took off his coat, disposed of it and his hat, and then sat down.

"Well," he asked, coolly, "how did you like it?"

"We find it—a bit stiff," Jane answered.

"How do you like Redmond?"

"We like him *very* much." This from Pansy.

"And my heroine—what's-her-name—you like her?"

"Not so much as Redmond."

"And you, Miss Jane; do you agree with 'Miss Peter Pansy' as I heard you call her?"

"Not altogether. I—I rather like the husband, too."

"By Jove!" ejaculated Biddulph, somewhat aghast. "Then you really *did* open the box? I—"

"Did you think we wouldn't?"

"I—it was a stupid jest. However, in a year's time you will be reading my works, so there is not so much harm done," he returned, unconsciously cynical, as he lit a cigaret. "Either of you ladies smoke?"

They both did, it appeared, on great occasions. This was a Great Occasion.

The novelist was amused, but also a little vexed. It was the old story of Pandora, he thought, ruefully, and they were just old enough to have the book do them no good.

After a long pause he asked Pansy how she liked the last chapter. After all, if she chose to read it, it was not his fault, and her opinion would be amusing. To his surprise she looked down in confusion.

"I didn't like it *so much*," she answered, "do you?"

"Well—yes. As a chapter it is distinctly good. It is a good bit of analysis, and as literature, it seems to me—not bad."

"Oh yes, we both liked the *style*," put in Jane, hastily.

"The deuce you did!"

"Just a *little* like Madame Bovary," remarked Pansy with a pensive squint down at her cigaret.

"Well, upon my word! However, if you go in for Flaubert, I'm sure I need not mind your reading my humble effort!"

Pansy laughed. "A very remarkable writer, Flaubert. Will you give me another cigaret, please?"

A moment later she rose. "Good-night, Mr. Biddulph. Thanks, so much."

"Good-night, ladies."

He closed the door softly after them and sat down. Amazing. And rather a pity.

Suddenly the door opened and Pansy came in.

"I say," she began hastily, "I'm afraid you are worried. Well—it was a joke. We planned it. I got that about Flaubert out of an article in the *Saturday Review* about another of your books."

"But—"

"As to the key, it hasn't even *touched* your box since you closed it."

"Are you in earnest, you little wretch?" he laughed croakingly; "you—you—am-amaze me."

"I give you my word of honor the key was in my pocket until we heard you coming. It—my word of honor."

Quite bewildered, he sat by the fire and tried to remember what the two girls had said to convince him that they had read the book, but it was all vague in his mind. And then, remembering her word of honor with something like relief, he took up a book and began to read.

Up-stairs Miss Lydden and Miss Petre undressed, with the door between their rooms wide open.

"Oh Pansy, it *was* wonderful. You are really a genius. You'll have a ripping time when you come out."

"My dear," Pansy was sitting on the floor taking off her stockings, "it was all *your* doing!"

Jane stared. "Mine?"

"Of course. The dispatch-box key is yours, isn't it?"

Brothers of the Wire

BY EDWARD BOLTWOOD

THE yellow walls and ceiling of the room, glistening with new shellac, reflected like polished copper the light of the electric-lamps. Now and then a telegraph-sounder chattered angrily, or the buzzer of a telephone whirred; and through the windows came the constant metallic voices of the night-enshrouded yard, the clamor of rail and wheel, and the panting of an eager locomotive. The room was tense and humming with the spirit of alert command. It was strange that there a man should sleep.

Little Cathcart, the second-trick dispatcher at division-headquarters, had twisted his chair sideways, so that when he awoke he was confronted by the clock. Yawning at the dial, he decided drowsily that it was the hour for his medicine. He stretched one arm above him and groped with his other hand for the vial in his pocket. The doctor had told him—

Suddenly the telegraph clicked. Cathcart's arm was petrified aloft, and his jaw hung helplessly. He was a grotesque figure, open-mouthed, contorted—

With a wrenching effort the train-dispatcher sprang up and turned, as if upon a murderous enemy. But he was alone. He remembered sending his copy-operator to the hotel for a pitcher of milk. How long ago? Good Heavens, how long ago? A freight-engine screamed hoarsely to a switchman, and the telegraph clicked again. Cathcart snapped the cut-off.

His mood was that of sullen revolt. Mentally his muttering echoed itself at a jumble of incongruous things—at the noisy whistle, and the puff of steam, and the drip of water from the cooler; at the numerals and abbreviations on the train-sheet, and at the shaking fingers in which the paper trembled; at the doctor, who had been puzzled by his lurking and intermittent fever, and at the head dispatcher, who had doubted it and kept him on duty."

All at once, a dozen words leaped

from the sheet into Cathcart's brain. The paper fluttered to the floor.

His terrified eyes sought mechanically the clock and the sheaf of copied orders, but his eyes perceived little of what was near. His vision was miraculously prolonged to a lonely sidetrack—to 27 siding on the Nebraska prairie, many miles westward. A freight-train, in accordance with his now irrevocable instructions, pulled from 27 siding to the main line; and down the line, head on to the freight, swept the unwarned special, running free.

The picture dimmed, and Cathcart saw another. It was the picture of old Tilden, the road's oldest dispatcher, on that day when Tilden forgot, until he realized that it was too late to clear the track at Houston Bridge for the express. Cathcart himself had found Tilden that day, sprawled over the instrument-table, where the key, clogged with his life-blood, had just sounded his loyal summons for the wrecking-crew, the revolver still smoking in the old man's dead hand.

Moving stiffly, like an automaton, Cathcart fumbled for a six-chambered something in a drawer of the desk. A distant door slammed, and Willis, the copy-operator, laughed briskly in the corridor.

"Here's your angel-food, Cartie," he called. "The bar-keep wanted to put rum in it, but I didn't—Cartie! Jim!"

The room was empty. From it a rear door swung open directly on the yard. Willis flew to the threshold, shouting in vain. He rang up the division-superintendent on the telephone, and the head dispatcher. Then his jaw hardened as he took Cathcart's chair at the table and released the indignant wires.

The young fellow who represented the Nebraska Central at Red Flat Station, far to the east of division-headquarters, came out on the platform, as

usual, to greet the rising sun. He was in the habit of doing this, because the sun was about all the company there was for him at Red Flat. It had been a shipping-point for cattle when the road was built, but the corrals and chutes had vanished. Red Flat Station survived—a shack, a telegraph-key, and a very lonesome young agent.

He glanced wistfully to right and left along the road. No train had passed since the rumbling string of "coals" at three o'clock; none was due until 9:40. It was a dreary spot, Red Flat. Higgins, the section-hand, stopped, not often, for a meal. Conductors stopped, less often, for "DS" orders, and guyed the boy about his job.

He strolled out between the rails and saw a man lying in the ditch.

Begrimed and motionless, the stranger was huddled on one side, his head half-buried in the black dust. An expression of awe-stricken, childish pity overspread the agent's simple face. He stooped and brushed away the cinders.

"Must have fell off a truck of them coals," he whispered, noting the delicate, torn hands. "No, brakie, that poor cuss wasn't. The poor little cuss!"

And the prostrate man opened his eyes.

"Well, I'm darned!" observed the agent, with a grin of relief. "Hello, sport!"

He put his arm under the man and raised him. As he did so, the glass fragments of a medicine-vial tinkled on the gravel.

"Pins O.K.?" asked the Samaritan.

"Broken," moaned Cathcart.

"Ankle, seems like," said the other critically. "Buck up for a minute, and I'll jack you to the shanty."

He carried Cathcart up the bank and into the station, where the fugitive promptly fainted. The agent bore him to a cot, mopped him with water, cut away shoe and stocking, and bound the injured foot with cotton waste. He introduced whisky with a spoon to the stranger's lips, and soon Cathcart sighed and dozed.

The agent dangled his legs over the edge of the platform, watching Higgins clatter by the station on an old-fashioned

railroad velocipede. He invited the section-hand to breakfast.

"Can't tarry, kid," replied Higgins without dismounting. "I got to sprawl out for Eagle. Superintendent's there."

"Say, I picked a dude hobo from the ditch just now," announced the agent.

"Look out he don't massacree you," yelled Higgins, over his shoulder. "So long, Tilden."

"So long," said *young* Tilden of Red Flat.

His guest was sunk in a deep-breathing trance, and Tilden, try as he might, could not rouse him for bacon and coffee. But when the telegraph crackled, Tilden, washing dishes, heard a queer gasp and turned to see the stranger propped on an elbow, wild and staring.

"What—what's that?" he mumbled.

"That's the lad at Eagle joshing me," said Tilden. "You'd better sleep, friend."

"Sleep!" cried Cathcart, with shrill distinctness as he struggled to rise.

"There, take it easy," soothed Tilden, restraining him. "You've had a smash-up, and—"

"A smash-up. Yes," Cathcart's eyes were glazed by an abrupt horror. "A smash-up," he repeated. "'Way out at—'way out at—where?"

"Why, right here at Red Flat," Tilden said. "You flopped off a freight, right here at Red Flat. Now, take it easy."

He went out to the pump, and Cathcart laboriously constructed on the rough ceiling a map of the Saddle Division of the Nebraska Central Railroad. The knot-hole in the far corner was Red Flat. The stove-pipe in the middle was Ferryville, division-headquarters. And the big cobweb overhead was 27 siding on the prairie—a double wreck, the maimed and the slain.

Cathcart groaned aloud. The mental effort had partially cleared his brain. He could thank the fortune, which, in the delirium of the previous night, had hidden him on an east-bound train at Ferryville, and not on one bound towards the—the cobweb. He rolled his head on the pillow, scheming and planning. How much did this young agent know? Tilden—he remembered now. Old Tilden's

son! The boy returned, carrying a pail of water, and Cathcart, being ready, began.

"I expect I had the only accident on the road last night, didn't I, Tilden?" he said.

Tilden was surprised rather by the discovery of his name than by the oddity of the question.

"How'd you know me?" he demanded suspiciously.

"Seems as if somebody yelled to you from the track this morning," explained Cathcart.

"Oh, sure," laughed Tilden. "I saved you out some coffee. What's your name, anyhow?"

By way of answer Cathcart sipped the coffee thoughtfully. When it was finished, he dropped the tin cup on the quilt and held out his hand to Tilden, as if an impulse of thorough confidence.

"Look here, Tilden," he said, "you're as square as they make 'em; I can see that. A trump in a thousand; the sort a poor devil can bank on. Isn't that so?"

"Certain thing," responded Tilden uneasily, grasping the other's hand with the assuring vigor of embarrassed youth.

"Well, I'm in a police-scrape," said Cathcart, "I'm on the sneak. I don't know but what I—but what I've killed a man."

"How's that?" the agent stammered.

"My name's Malone," Cathcart went on. "Daniel E. Malone. I run a cigar-stand, over to South Ferryville. A drunk came in the place last night and started to abuse my dead father. He called him things a yellow dog would have fought at. I stood it long as I could, Tilden. Then I got kind of crazy. I hit him. There was an iron railing—his head struck an iron railing—"

Pretending to close his eyes, he scrutinized Tilden, and the boy's cheeks flushed wrathfully.

"I skipped," resumed Cathcart. "The man was a politician—a friend of the cops. There weren't any witnesses. I wouldn't have had a chance. I skipped."

"Abusin' your father, was he?" blurted Tilden. "I hope you did kill him—"

"I'm not sure," said Cathcart. "But they'll trace me, and here I am, crippled,

in plain sight of anybody coming along."

"We'll fix that," reflected Tilden. "There's a lean-to behind, Malone."

"R-F! R-F! R-F!" ticked the telegraph, calling "Red Flat."

Luckily for Cathcart, Tilden turned his back to answer. Cathcart, afraid to breathe, read the message and reply intently. He forced a measure of perplexity into his voice.

"What does that mean?" he complained.

"That's only Eagle again," said Tilden. "There aint one chance in a hundred you'll be seen here, Malone. But we wont take even that one. I'll rig you a bunk in the lean-to. I'm with you, old man."

"D-S! D-S!" sputtered the key.

"Somebody waking up headquarters," interpreted Tilden. "Can't have nothing to say about you. Don't worry."

He hustled out with blankets to the adjoining shed. Lying breathless, Cathcart took the message—an interminable list of car-numbers, which gave him no clew. Tilden concealed him behind a stack of fire-wood in the shed.

"You sleep away, Malone," he said, "and don't worry."

Hardly had the boy closed the flimsy door before Cathcart crept painfully to it. His heart seemed to quiver almost in unison with the click of the telegraph-sounder. At intervals the sympathetic Tilden came with water and food; and then Cathcart must scurry to his blanket, affecting unconcern, while the snapping wire drummed in his ears like the rattle of a vigilant snake, bidding him listen to its alarm.

As the day wore on his delirium grew. The telegraph became, to his fever-smitten fancy, a sentient being of life and vengeance. He had shamefully betrayed the wire, he had fled from it, and now, restless and unsparing, it taunted and pursued him. When night fell he was conscious of one thing only—an all-compelling rage to destroy that chattering foe on the table in the room beyond, and with it, if need be, the table and the room and the roof above. He found matches in his pocket and laughed softly.

Tilden was inclined to plume himself

upon his success as a nurse. An evening inspection of his hospital showed Malone smiling in his sleep, showed nothing of the tinder and shavings collected beneath the blanket. Tilden paced the shadowy platform, waiting for the late express, due now at Eagle, ten miles away. A cricket piped in the brush.

Two rifle-barrels, like monstrous steel fingers, were pointed at Tilden out of the darkness, and a black mask with a pair of velvety eyes materialized itself close in front of him.

"Hands up! Higher! Now, Chris! Spotted 'em?"

Hurried footsteps pattered about inside the room. A fourth masked man appeared carrying the crimson signal-lantern and the pouch of torpedoes.

"You liar!" snarled Tilden. "You snivelling crook, Mal—"

The cruel gag cut savagely against his mouth. They trussed his arms and marched him into the night. The deserted station blinked with apparent impotence at the rails it should be guarding; and Chris Lafler, a train-robbber of poetic temperament, addressed it from the curve selected for the hold-up.

"The papers'll be full of you in the mornin'," he chuckled. "You needn't look so blame modest, Red Flat."

He probably would have omitted this piece of sentimental advice had he been able to see the little man who was dragging himself, inch by inch, across the station floor.

On the ceiling was his map of the road, alive with moving trains. Cathcart's thin face was damp with the sweat of suffering, but he did not falter. He could not. It was as if the electric-wires were tugging at his muscles. He crawled straight to the table and set his finger lovingly upon the key, and the touch of it was to him the caress of a forgiving sweetheart.

"Eagle! Eagle! Eagle!" said Cathcart, as the words sped down the line. "I'm Red Flat, Eagle—yes, Red Flat. Warn 69: Chris Lafler gang here faking danger-signals. Think four men is all. Can be taken if crew is well-heeled. Tilden is prisoner with robbers. Repeat."

From the threshold Cathcart gazed dully at the crimson spark of the distant lantern on the track. A long time he lay there, and great weariness numbed his soul; but he was content, for the wire and he were friends again.

The stormy fusillade of shots around the crimson spark did not disturb him; and, indeed, he was aroused but lazily when the express rumbled on to the station, with hysterical passengers hanging from the windows of the Pullman and with armed train-men on the steps, exultant in victory.

Young Tilden leaped from the tender, waving a bit of rope at his patient.

"That's him!" he cried. "That's who must 'a' done the wiring!"

"Why, that's Cathcart!" said Myers, the division-superintendent.

The crowd surged over the platform, and the gray haired superintendent knelt at Cathcart's side.

"You've got me, Mr. Myers," whispered Cathcart. "Don't make it hard."

"Hard?" queried the superintendent.

"Wreck—27 siding—last night—" Cathcart gasped.

Myers, an old railroader, understood.

"Listen!" said he, bending close. "There wasn't any wreck at 27 siding last night. Might have been, but the special had a hot-box at Grant's and so Willis caught it in time. Try to savvy that, Cathcart."

He straightened up and beckoned to a physician among the excited passengers.

"Go at him, doc," he commanded. "He was taken sick and crazy-like, at Ferryville, and wandered off. Hadn't ought to have been kept working at all. And the luck of the road, I reckon, landed him here to turn this trick. Go at him—the company can't do enough for him now. It's worth a hundred thousand dollars in the treasury to wipe out the Chris Lafler gang this way."

"Feeling pretty bad, my son?" asked the doctor kindly.

"Oh, no," said Cathcart. "I'm all right—you bet."

And he smiled.

Amethyst Windows

BY ELEANOR M. INGRAM

Author of "I Am The Emperor," etc

ILLUSTRATED BY EDMUND FREDERICK

THE low beat of the tiny engine stopped, the frosty, swirling wake faded out and vanished like mermaid jewels in the moonlight, and an army of silver ripples scurried away on either side. The man in the launch pushed over the miniature cocks that fed his toy, and rose to gaze at the shore.

"It is," he murmured with incredulous pleasure. "It really is!"

The boat rocked softly; the tide was running in and silently contesting the current out, strong here in the narrows of the river. The night had the crystalline clearness of the first frosts; still low in the sky hung the October moon and in its light the mountains rose on either side, stretching away one behind the other, magical, velvet-soft in the reds and browns and yellows which clad them in state to receive the Winter. Long dark shadows nestled in their hollows, steel-gray patches here and there revealed their uncompromising cliffs. And opposite the boat, alone in all the unmarred hills, stood the house.

Very white it showed against the mountain-side: one of those old houses whose enormous pillars rise from ground to roof and give the effect of bareness from their very burden of ornamentation. The moonlight passed pale fingers across it caressingly, as if in recognition of long nights together, and in return the house flashed back its one tinge of color from each square of glass.

"Amethyst windows," murmured the man again, his dark eyes grave.

Even more clearly than in the sunlight it shone now; each pane was glorious in rosy lavender, in most ethereal violet. Not stained glass; never had artisan of Venice or Bohemia achieved tints so exquisite, so fairy-fine, so delicately lum-

inous. Not one in a thousand could have named the master-workman who had wrought this; the man in the launch knew, and quite unconsciously bared his head.

Higher and higher mounted the moon; however slowly, the boat was drifting steadily nearer the shore. And suddenly the man saw the heart of all this beauty, the spirit of the house. He gave a faint exclamation and mechanically pushed his little anchor from the deck to prevent a further change of position.

It was the central window of the facade where the moonlight fell most strongly, and in all the sea of violet and silver leaned a girl, gazing out. The pale lavender of her dress shimmered in the light, the gleam of color was repeated in the narrow chain of gems around her slim throat; somehow the watcher was certain that the deepest purple of all lay in her shaded eyes. Very fair and serene was the face apparently turned towards him.

They looked at each other a long time: he standing in the swaying boat without a thought of his conspicuousness; she immovable among the moving shadows.

The interruption was the most prosaic that could be imagined: a hoarse whistle, a glare of blinding electric light, and one of the huge nightboats swept around the sharp bend of the river.

The man turned swiftly as the broad ray of the searchlight flashed between him and the shore, then as hastily looked back. For an instant the house stood out in a concentrated brightness, which made daylight weak by comparison, every window ablaze; then the great lamp swung away and left all doubly dark.

Dazzled, rocking in the surge of the mighty paddles, the man lost the thread.

When he looked again the central window was empty.

The rush and turmoil died away, the moonlight stole back, all the lovely panorama of mountain and river shone out in untroubled calm. The man passed his hand across his eyes and searched the tinted windows hopefully. Nothing, absolutely nothing.

Half an hour passed, an hour. After a while he bent reluctantly over the engine.

The splash of the rising anchor seemed needlessly loud, the click of the spark sent light flying echoes; with the first explosion the perfumed night drew away its mystery and left him only the real.

"Last night," said Felicidad, "there was a launch on the river, Tío."

The morning sun came blithely through the windows, filling the quaint room with light whose gold bore hints of royal purple, as if here the sun felt himself an honored guest and so assumed the regal color. Warmly the radiance lingered about the young girl's bent head as she drew tiny circles on the tablecloth with her spoon.

There came no answer to her remark and presently she tried again.

"I was afraid—it was so late—I was afraid the noise would wake you, Tío."

"I was not asleep," her uncle answered briefly.

It was a handsome old gentleman who sat chipping his egg and lending a divided attention to Felicidad, if not a very happy-looking one. The soft curling white hair and mustache might have lent his face a deceptive gentleness, unless one had noted his firm chin and the straight line between his brows. Felicidad had enjoyed many opportunities of noting them; she glanced that way now beneath her long lashes.

"It is October," she went on. "Hardly any little boats are on the Hudson now. Did you not tell me once that my cousin Robert liked such small engines, Tío?"

He winced and frowned together.

"I never told you anything concerning Robert, Felicidad. But that is true."

"He looks like you," she mused.

"I beg your pardon," he corrected stiffly, "he resembles his mother."

Her violet eyes widened.

"Tío? Why, the photograph in your book—"

"Like his mother. He is not like me in the least; the most obstinate, wilful—The subject is disagreeable to me, Felicidad, I beg you will not speak of it."

"No, Tío; I am sorry. But—"

"Well?"

She left the sentence uncompleted so long that he forgot it. But when they rose to leave the room she spoke again.

"I wish you could have looked through my window last night, Tío."

"Why?" he demanded in astonishment.

She shook her head playfully.

"They are magic windows, 'fairy casements opening on perilous seas.' I never saw the river so lovely." She paused, listening, and suddenly the rosy flush blossomed in her cheeks. "I am going to the garden."

The low beat of the muffled engine had stopped before she reached the shore. Concealed behind the border of trees, she surveyed the man who stood in the launch and gazed earnestly at the house.

No one knew better than Felicidad that the place appeared quite deserted from the river; guessing that the stranger must be in doubt whether the vision of the night before were real, she smiled in her shelter. Once she took a step forward undecidedly, then retreated again.

"This is twice I have seen you," she said under her breath, nodding at the boat and its master. "Once you have seen me. The next time, I think—I think I will dare."

She did not leave until the launch fusily started on. The distance was too great for her to see his expression, but she needed no translation of the ridiculously familiar gesture of impatience with which he pushed back the thick waving dark hair. The dimples came with a gasp of recognition.

The second time for him was dawn; the dawn of the very next day. In late October dawn does not argue too appallingly early an hour. The man slipped around the shoulder of Cornwall Bay in the first gray light and stopped before the house just when the East flushed into rose and purple and gold.

Deeper and warmer than he had seen them yet, glowed the tinted windows; and in the central one showed a vague figure. He gave an exclamation, leaning forward breathlessly; but even with the movement the girl vanished. He held his position, watching.

A kingfisher plunged into the water with its chuckling cry, along the rocks a squirrel bounded, chattering volubly. Not only the sky, but the river also was now a flood of rosy color, through whose tranquil surfaces sailed whole fleets of tiny golden clouds. His eyes on the violet windows, the man saw nothing.

"They are brightest at sunrise," said the most delicious voice in the world, a voice which troubled the dawn no more than bird or chipmunk. "Our windows have found favor in the sight of monsieur!"

She was standing on the broad shelving shore, not twenty feet from him; her lavender muslin dress the tint of the palest clouds, her eyes of the deepest purple bar that lay across the gate of the sun. The unopened morning was not more delicately virginal, more innocently mirthful.

"You are real?" cried the man in the boat dazedly. "Oh, I beg your pardon—after the other night—"

"You believed in phantoms?"

"I had to come back."

"You came to see the windows, of course."

He had recovered himself, and his brilliant smile flashed to meet hers.

"The first time, yes."

Felicidad snapped a plume of goldenrod and drew it meditatively through her fingers.

"Some people rowed past the other day," she remarked demurely. "They called them, 'pretty stained glass.'"

He laughed, devouring her with his eyes.

"I wonder, how you knew they were not," she pursued.

The glamour of the dawn had touched them both; he sat down on the small low



The man saw the heart of all this beauty

deck to be nearer her, his dark irregular face boyishly eager. He scarcely looked his scant twenty-five years.

"I am a Bostonian," he explained; "I grew up in a house with such windows, so colored by decades of sunshine. And when I saw these I loved them. I was even absurd enough to fancy, that if I looked back through them I might find some of the things the years have stolen."

"They are magical," she asserted gravely. "There is a tradition that nothing seen through them is ever again commonplace. My nurse used to tell me they were fed on sunlight, and if two glances met across them in anger or unkindness the crystal would fall shattered."

"We saw each other first through them," he reminded her. "I wish they would lend me a little, just a very little of their grace, *señorita*."

The soft Spanish word fell most naturally from his lips and brought a sparkle of triumph to Felicidad's expression.

"They have taught me the black art, Señor Bostonian; I am going to read your name. You are called Robert Perez —tell me the rest to prove me right."

He gave a cry of amazement.

"You know me? Oh, but I never saw you—I could not forget."

The implied compliment brought her smile again.

"Tell me the rest, then," she commanded.

"Robert Perez Gresham," he repeated obediently. "And you, *señorita*, and you?"

"Felicidad Gresham."

"My cousin!"

She courtesied to him on the shore.

"If I had not recognized you, do you think I would have engaged in this frivolous conversation? And if our amethyst windows are the same as yours, it is because the houses were built at the same time and the glass for them came from England on the same ship."

"I am coming ashore."

"Not at all; the river is full of boulders, your launch would be crushed."

"Cousin—"

"Cousin?"

They looked at each other, Robert leaning from the bow towards her; their faces brilliant with youth and excitement.

"I knew I had a cousin, of course," he said. "I knew there was an old house on the Hudson; but, somehow, I never thought."

"I knew I had a cousin," she mimicked sedately. "I had even seen his photograph; and so when I saw him staring rudely at our windows, I did think."

"You are not real; I believe you will vanish when the sun comes up. Why have I never heard anything of you, Lady Iris, except just barely that you existed?"

"Perhaps because you did not inquire. But I heard of you, cousin."

"You are frowning," he protested with mock anxiety. "What appalling chronicle has been poured into your ears?"

She shook her golden-brown head

seriously. The smile fled from her eyes.

"That you quarreled with your father three years ago and went away from home. That you were selfish and obstinate and unkind, I heard that."

The smile died from his lips and his dark eyes fell before the accusing ones opposite.

"It doesn't sound very nice, Cousin Felicidad, does it?" he admitted quietly. "But perhaps there was a bit more to it than that."

"Your father is—" she caught herself, "must be, old. And even if he were rather exacting one might have consideration."

"I have been tried and condemned; are you going to inflict punishment and send me away, *belle cousine*?"

"No, no," she denied hotly. "But I wish, if there is anything to say, I wish you would say it."

She took a step nearer the edge in her earnest vehemence, her cheeks quite pink.

Involuntarily Robert put out his hand:

"Take care; you will fall—"

A band of glittering light shot across the river, the rose-colored flags of the morning were swiftly furled, and up among the cloudfleets sailed the golden galleon of the sun. Water and sky together shimmered into palest turquoise around and above the two.

"I am too far away," he pleaded, the laughter sparkling back to his face. "How can I make confessions over twenty-five feet of river? I will come back with a rowboat."

Felicidad melted into an answering smile.

"Very well; to-morrow."

"There will be a divine moon to-night, my cousin."

"To-morrow."

He regarded her tentatively.

"The magic windows are adorable by moonlight; would it be permitted to enjoy them, *señorita*, if one asked no more?"

"I can forbid the Hudson to no one," she replied demurely. "Good-by, cousin."

"You are going."

"I have gone."

"I said you would vanish with the sun; stay a moment—"

But Felicidad had stepped back and



"I did not hear you come, this time"

let the low swinging branches close between.

It was nearly an hour later that Mr. Gresham came down to the dining-room. He looked rather fatigued in the early light, and his chin was set even more firmly than usual.

"I did not sleep very well," he explained with dignity, to his clear eyed niece. "You are aware that I am troubled with insomnia. Where were you, Felicidad, at so early an hour this morning; I heard your step in the hall before dawn?"

Felicidad rested her head against the high back of her chair.

"Tío, do you remember the story of a little girl who went through a looking-glass into the world beyond?"

"Indistinctly."

"Well, this morning so I went through the purple windows."

He chipped his inevitable egg with the air of tolerant indulgence one shows a child.

"Ah! And what did you find?"

"I am not sure whether it was the pot of gold at the foot of the rainbow or only a glint of moonshine on the face of the cliff. Tío, I wish I might speak of something I may not."

He laid down his spoon to look at her.

"You may say what you choose, Felicidad."

"Then, are you very angry with my cousin, Tío?"

The timidity of the voice was disarming. Mr. Gresham carefully dropped a lump of sugar—which he detested—in his coffee, and laid the eggspoon in the bowl.

"Robert is unpardonable," he declared icily. "Angry is scarcely an adequate term. Felicidad; I might even characterize it as childish."

There was a pause; he mechanically removed the erring spoon and stirred his coffee with it.

"But, when the winter approaches—there is a touch of frost in the air to-day, Felicidad."

"Yes, Tío."

His tone altered a little more.

"When I consider that he was altogether unfitted to support himself; he was quite impractical and given to use-

less studies; when I remember he was accustomed to every comfort, I almost think—"

"Dear Tío?"

"I almost think I could accept an apology."

After a moment she leaned over and took his cup, her velvet eyes bright behind their sparkling lashes.

"Let me give you fresh coffee. Dear, how warmly the sunshine comes through the windows!"

That night the puff of a tiny launch came down the river at moonrise, and ceased before the house. A persistent cricket chirped and creaked incessantly; high on Storm King a fury owl sent its plaintive banshee-like call vibrating through the air; but neither light nor sound broke the cool glitter of the violet panes. An hour, two hours; at last the boat dejectedly retreated.

The morning dawned fair and crisp, the first warning of coming November in the spicy air. With the earliest streak of crimson came the tireless and already familiar beat of the little engine, its cessation followed by the falling anchor's splash.

Felicidad, emerging from the trees in her long light coat and floating lace scarf, found the visitor gazing at her across his miniature deck.

"Good-morning," she said, halting.

"Good-morning," he returned with equal sobriety.

She regarded the canoe swinging astern.

"You prefer it out there?" she inquired delicately.

"*Señorita*, the amethyst windows looked so cold last night that I dared not venture ashore without permission."

She sat down on a huge boulder and folded her hands in her lap. When the bow of the canoe grated on the shore she glanced suggestively at the boulder opposite, an armchair tapestried in emerald moss.

But Robert loomed taller than she expected as he paused before her; at close range his laughing black eyes were irresistibly young and frank. Felicidad found herself putting her hand in the brown one he held out and echoing his smile.

"When I think," he said, "that I might have gone back to the city, cousin, and never have seen you, I adore those windows."

"To the city? You live there?"

"My work is in New York; I am playing here, on a vacation."

"Your work?" she repeated. "I—I did not imagine you working."

He flung back his head and laughed.

"Cousin, cousin, why not? Did you fancy I existed like the lilies, and would I not be rather bored if I did? Sweet cousin, it is only you who are 'fed on amethystine light and morning dew.'"

Felicidad scrutinized him furtively as he sat down on his boulder, but yachting clothes are noncommittal. Who could argue comfort or poverty from a dark-blue flannel shirt with a scarlet handkerchief knotted at the throat; it might equally be the costume of a miner or a millionaire.

"You were going to tell me," she began, with New England directness.

"Why I am all those names you called me," he supplied, the seriousness stealing back to his expression as it had the morning before. "I wish—I think you would understand better, cousin, if you knew my father. He is the most charming Don Quixote, only a bit difficult for us poor windmills."

Felicidad moved uneasily.

"It is such a comic opera, melodramatic affair, after all; the violent scene, the disinherited son, stubborn un-forgiveness, and silence. Why, I haven't seen him for three years! I believe I am telling this backwards," he pushed the mass of dark hair off his forehead and gazed unseeingly across the river. "You know, cousin, my mother was a Spaniard; a lady of Granada."

"Since I bear her name."

"The most beautiful name in the world. She lived behind those other purple windows in Boston, a pomegranate blossom brought to the North. Always she and I spoke Spanish together; as other children hear Cinderella or Puss-in-Boots, I heard of Cid and Pelayo and Fernan González. She taught me together *el pundonor* and the love of her country; and when I was fifteen she died."

Felicidad's lip quivered.

"I cannot remember mine," she breathed. "I was a baby."

"I was more fortunate, poor cousin. But you were spared the losing."

Above, the sky slipped from gray to azure, the dawn's rosy fingers were laid on the edge of the eastern hills.

"Three years ago the Spanish-American war broke out," he went on a trifle abruptly. "My father had served in the Civil war; he ordered me as a matter of course to enlist. Naturally I am an American first of all—if there had been the slightest necessity I would have done so; but there was not. There were more volunteers than could be accepted, and I could not kill her people for mere pride. The very sound of their language catches at my heart. So, I refused."

"But he did not—surely he did not send you away just for that?" she cried in distress.

He smiled at her with a tiny straight line between his brows.

"Oh, I warned you it was all out of date, my cousin. We both grew angry—I have a bad temper and I was three years younger—he called me a name that no one ever called me before or since. In the end he sent me away from the house with the windows. He closed it, in fact, and went away himself; I have no idea where."

Felicidad slipped from her rock to hold out her hands remorsefully.

"And I blamed *you!* I called you those things. I am so sorry, Cousin Robert—"

He caught the little hands, all his gayety alight again.

"Sorry for what? Cousin, are you going to let an exile from his own see the light through your violet crystals?"

Flushed, tingling, she drew her fingers from his and turned to the river.

"Gentlemen, the King!" she exclaimed, in merry imitation of the old cry, and courtesied to the yellow sun as it rolled up.

"Does that mean I must go away?" he asked regretfully.

"Presently, please. Cousin Robert, you will not be offended if I do not take you to the house, yet? You see, there is some one who might not let me come like this



"You should not, cousin, you might spoil it all."

any more if he knew that you were here."

"Some relative who has pronounced outlawry on the outlawed? How could I be offended, *señorita*, if I perceive the least shadow of permission to come to-morrow?"

She glanced at him from under her curling lashes and their eyes laughed together.

But she stopped him when the canoe was just leaving the shore.

"Cousin Robert," she said hurriedly, "have you ever thought that your father might worry about you—I mean, might wonder if you suffered, without friends, without money?"

Robert regarded her across the yard of shining water, holding the canoe still with his paddle.

"I would be the coward he called me, my cousin, if I were afraid of the world."

"No, but—he might grieve to think you had not what he could give you. That you could need all of which he has too much. I say it clumsily—"

A bright, amused surprise swept his face; a face where his father's firm chin was contradicted by the sensitive lips, as Northern steadiness struggled with Southern gayety in his eyes.

"You say it deliciously, *señorita*, only I never allow myself to need anything; it is a habit."

Felicidad unconsciously put one hand over her hurrying heart.

"Not even, him?" she questioned daringly, her voice a breath of sound.

"I meant material things. I need, I shall always need, what lies behind amethyst windows, Felicidad."

The sumach trees drew their fernlike curtains protectingly around her as she sped up the slope; in the level sunbeams the forests glowed amber and garnet and warm topaz.

Mr. Gresham met her on the veranda.

"There is frost again," he remarked petulantly. "I could not sleep."

Felicidad sank down on the top step and catching his hand rested her soft young cheek against it.

"There is more than frost, Tío," she declared. "There is the chill of coming Winter, the snow, and the keen wind. Tío, it will be cold and lonely outside."

"Felicidad!" Did the voice tremble?

"Tío, suppose there were someone who wanted to come in and did not know how? Would it not be kind to help him a little, only a little?"

He took away his hand brusquely.

"If you are alluding to Robert, Felicidad, pray remember that he is at fault; if he chose to return I would consider the question. He is very obstinate, like most people. Will you be good enough to order the coffee?"

"Yes," replied Felicidad absently; she was listening to the sound of a retreating launch.

A gust of wind shook the trees, sending an eddy of painted leaves across the walks. Mr. Gresham turned sharply and went in.

The moon rose round and full that night for the last time in the month; indeed one could almost fancy the silver flower had already begun to curl on one edge. This time, when the launch stopped outside, a light burned in the central window, and between lamplight and moonlight was silhouetted the figure of a girl.

The boat was only a dark line on the glistening river; Felicidad tilted her small head in a vain effort to distinguish more. The wee red and green lanterns were unlit, in direct defiance of the law; it was impossible to tell bow from stern.

Suddenly came the thud of some light object against the glass. Startled, she looked down, and fairly into Robert's eyes as he stood on the terrace a few feet below.

"Oh!" gasped Felicidad, then ran to close the room door.

When she came back it was to raise the quaint hook and push open the swinging sash.

"You should not," she expostulated with reproach as she leaned over the sill. "Cousin, you might spoil it all."

"I will go right away," he assured her humbly. "I just could not help it, *señorita*. And there was a reason, truly; I have been called to New York to-morrow."

She looked down at her own round white arms as they rested on the sill.

"I am sorry," she said under her breath.

His face kindled into incredulous delight.

"Do you mean that?" he cried. "Do you mean it, indeed? Felicidad. I shall be back in a day, and then—"

"Hush, please hush. I was sorry, because I believe it would be for your good to stay, Cousin Robert."

But the prim rebuke only brought the dancing smile to his eyes again.

"I believe so, I almost dare believe so, Cousin Felicidad. Have you, I wonder, the least idea how lovely you are with the lamplight touching your hair to gold and the moonlight making your face of silver?"

"Someone is coming."

"I will go, I will go, princess in the amethyst palace. But it is very cold outside here; may I not even touch your hand for good-by?"

She put it in his for an instant.

"Go, please go," she begged.

"And come back?"

"Yes, only go now."

The knob of the door rattled; Felicidad swung the window shut and hastily drew the curtain across, ruthlessly snatching the last ray of violet light from the outsider.

The next day the fine weather broke; a chill northeast storm swept down across the mountains, smothering all in mist and rain.

"It will be fair to-morrow," asserted Felicidad across the breakfast-table.

But it was not fair the next day, nor the next, nor the next. All the week furious winds whipped the river to hissing froth, stripped the shivering trees and drove the cold rain against windows or under doors. Felicidad began with impatience, passed to vexation, and culminated in exasperation. Mr. Gresham chafed at the gloom and complained wearily of the unseasonable temperature. More than once Felicidad found him gazing out where the dahlias lay dejectedly across the garden-walk among withered leaves.

"The day goes by like a shadow on the heart—" sang black Cleo in the kitchen.

And Felicidad nodded her head gravely, listening.

"Felicidad," said her uncle, dropping his newspaper to the floor, "to-morrow will be your twentieth birthday. Light the lamps; I wish to talk with you. And draw the curtains, my dear; the storm is disagreeable."

But the longest storm must end at last, and this one chose to end on Felicidad's birthday. Summer stole back in the lull; quietly and gently dawn flushed along the tranquil East where one great star lingered, forgotten. As Felicidad ran down through the heaps of parti-colored leaves which littered every path, the bow of the canoe slid noiselessly up on the beach.

They smiled at each other silently, already too good friends for the need of greetings.

"I did not hear you come, this time," Felicidad said dreamily, her eyes going past him; then she gave an exclamation. "Why—the boat; where is your boat?"

He stepped ashore, avoiding her questioning gaze.

"I did not bring it. Cousin, was ever such an intolerably long week? I have grown old."

But she refused the distraction, absently leaving her hand in his while she searched his bright face.

"What have you done with it?" Cousin Robert, please—do we not know each other well enough for you to tell me that?"

He deliberately touched his lips to the small careless hand.

"Forgive me, *señorita*; I have sold it."

Felicidad sank down on the boulder.

"I knew it!" she exclaimed, on the verge of tears. "I *knew* you were poor, though you laughed and would not tell. Oh, you must come home, you shall! He wants you, he must want you. Come back—"

"No, no," he protested in dismay. "Do not think such things; I am not poor. Felicidad, you do not understand."

"You are, you are. Let me take care of you."

He came a step nearer, between distress and amusement.

"I never meant to tell you, but if I must—you will keep my secret, *señorita?*"

"Yes."

"Then the year my father quarreled with me, the greater part of his fortune was lost in a tangle of affairs—it hardly matters how. You know he is not a business-man at all; his lawyer attends to everything for him, so the news came to me first. He does not know yet; he never will, I hope."

"But, how?" she faltered.

"Why, I am not very wise, or very useful, my cousin, but I happen to have been constructed with a genius for doing one thing pretty well; and it is something the world wants done. The day before our final quarrel a great company here in New York asked me to take charge of their laboratories. My father's lawyer is his friend, and mine; he knew that with affairs in this condition my father would refuse all aid from me, and so we kept the secret. Fortunately the lost fortune was not very large—as fortunes go in these extravagant days—so my income will just about fit his. I really am extremely lucky."

She was too overcome for contradiction.

"And you never let him guess! Cousin Robert, you never will?"

"Certainly not; the humiliation would crush him. If you knew him, cousin, how he is imperial and imperious," he laughed softly. "Please do not look like that; I only told you to relieve your mind of the dread of my starvation, you really seemed to fancy it imminent. Please laugh, Felicidad."

"No, at least, not yet. How, if your income just fits his, how do you live?"

He shook his dark head in despair.



"Light the lamps;
I wish to talk with you!"

"Cousin, cousin, you are certainly a Yankee! They do not *exactly* fit, you know, and I do other things; write a few stories, for instance, in the long evenings. I came resolved to ask you something, this morning; to ask you to venture a little, little way in my canoe. You cannot imagine how delightful the purple windows are from the river. Will you come, Felicidad?"

She met the merry, coaxing eyes.

"I will come, if you will tell me why you sold the launch. You loved it; one saw you did."

He sighed in mock resignation and yielded.

"Very well, Señorita Torquemada. My *seigneur* and father chose to draw suddenly on his supposed capital, and I had to supply the deficit in a hurry. Now will you come?"

Felicidad stood up, pale and shaken.

"Oh, cousin, *I* took your boat," she cried impetuously. "This house was not all my own, there was an old debt. To-day is my birthday, and last night your father told me he had paid that for a gift to me. *Please* do not look as if I were insane, Robert; he has been living here with me for two years, since I left boarding-school. They are your purple windows, yours. Come in; indeed he has wanted you—"

He caught her hands, himself almost equally pale.

"Felicidad, I have trusted you. You will keep faith with me; you will not tell him?"

"No, oh no! But you must come. He," the dimples broke through, "he warned me you were obstinate. Come."

He submitted dazedly and allowed her to lead him up the sloping path. Beneath the central window she released his sleeve.

"Wait—wait for me!" she commanded, and sped up the veranda.

Mr. Gresham was descending the stairs as the flying little figure came in, all the morning brightness in her glowing, radiant, face.

"It is impossible to sleep these Autumn days," he announced irritably. "There appears to be an unrest in the atmosphere."

"Not any more, Tío," panted Felicidad gladly. "Dear Tío, the Winter is

very far from to-day. I want to show you something—"

He regarded her, amazed and startled, but let her draw him to the breakfast-room. Opposite the window she detained him, her voice rippling with tears and laughter like the sunny river.

"Tío, do you remember the legend that the violet glass would break before an unkind glance? And, dear, if we love anyone, how can we stop?"

She drew aside as he advanced, and he saw Robert leaning against the old wistaria vine, his dark eyes on them.

After a moment Felicidad softly pushed open the swinging sash, looking from one to the other of the faces so strangely similar.

"I think, sir," said Robert most gently, "if you and Felicidad will let me in, that I am very tired of being outside the amethyst windows."

Mr. Gresham drew a long breath of the sweet cool Autumn air, then slowly reached his hand down over the sill.

"It is—it is quite time you came in, Robert," he answered majestically.

Felicidad smilingly laid her wet cheek against the lavender panes as the two clasped hands across her window. Straight and clear the first level sunbeams shot over hills and river, then finding their own handiwork, set the house ablaze from ground to roof with a very riot of purple and gold.

A Personal Matter

BY FRED JACKSON

As she gazed down at him—his white sailor-suit torn and mud-spattered, his long light curls in a tangle, a red welt beginning to spread just over his left eye—Miss Eaton realized her helplessness. He was not a person to be moved by argument, she saw that quite plainly, for grim determination was stamped clearly upon his bloody, dirt-speckled face. Neither would any pun-

ishment that she could devise, persuade him to divulge the culprit's name. He was willing to admit that something had happened to him on his way to school, but then that was evident enough, of course—even that someone had descended upon him unexpectedly from the rear and had "batted" him on the side of the head with a stick; but he firmly and steadily refused to tell who

the someone was. Miss Martin, his teacher, had reasoned with him at great length upon his first dramatic entrance into Room Three, but without success; now Miss Eaton, the gray haired principal, was meeting with no better results.

"I can't tell, Miss Eaton, honest I can't," he reiterated simply. "On'y tattletales tell things, an' anyway, I can do him up to a finish myself. I don't *need* any one to take sides with me in this, really, you know." He wiped away the blood from his visage with a very soiled handkerchief as he proceeded. "Boys have just *got* to fight things out. It wouldn't be square to tell, an' anyway, I can lick him much worse'n you can. It isn't anything to get punished in school, you see—kept in, or anything like that, but to be *whipped* is different, because all the fellahs'll be there, an' they'll know that he didn't fight fair. It's—it's a *personal* matter anyway, you see."

Miss Eaton frowned reprovingly at Miss Martin, who was wanting badly to laugh, and glanced down again at the little figure in the absurd sailor-suit.

"A personal matter?" she repeated, her eyebrows rising, her tone mildly interested.

"Quite personal—yes'm. You see—well, he objects to the way She dresses me—that's all. I don't like to be dressed this way—you know—either. It isn't natural or *practical* to dress a boy up this way with starched white cuffs an' collars an' things—because a fellah just *can't* stay clean, you know—like a girl—but She likes me this way—so I don't say anything—an' it's none of *his* business anyway. The fellahs don't understand about Her, you see, an' they think I'm a 'Cissy.' I'm not, really, you know. I licked four of 'em yesterday to make 'em stop calling me that, an' I can go straight down the line, if I've got to. Uncle Billee taught me a thing or two in *that* line, an' I guess they'll have to go *some* to get in under *my* guard. It's tiresome fightin' them all, honest Miss Eaton, but it's nothing to them, is it, if I don't mind Her dressing me up this way? She likes me this way. She wanted a girl, you see, because she wasn't used to boys much, but she had to make me

do. That's why She makes me wear curls an' things. She's young, you see, an' she doesn't understand. I know it's silly, but it makes Her happier an' it doesn't *hurt* anyone—does it?"

"I see," said Miss Eaton with something very motherly in her gray eyes; Miss Martin, who was very young, too, had forgotten the funny side of it entirely, and was on the verge of tears. Fortunately, the second bell rang just then and saved the situation, and Douthet Paul Grey availed himself of Miss Eaton's permission to cut back home and make himself presentable.

It chanced that none of his enemies perceived him. Indeed it would have made no difference, just then, if they had. For the moment his mind was on "slicking himself up;" the rest might very well wait a more opportune time. Gentlemen were always careful of their appearance, She had told him, and he must have a little care for *his*, now.

With the aid of the domestic staff—a large black motherly person named Charity—Douthet Paul reached his own room through dark and devious secret ways, and there he washed the dirt and blood from his person, brushed out his long hair, and submitted while Charity achieved six defiant-looking curls. His suit he merely brushed a bit, partly because he didn't want to take the time to change it, partly because he knew that another encounter with the enemy awaited a couple of hours on, and it seemed wiser to soil one suit badly, than to half-soil two. It would save Charity quite a lot of work.

He had always been thoughtful of Charity, just why he might not have been able to say. Instinct, perhaps. Besides, Charity seemed to understand more about a fellah than lots of people. It was almost as if she had, once upon a time been a boy herself and had never forgotten *all* of how a boy feels under various conditions.

Lessons had begun when he made his reentrance into Number Three, so he caused not so much disturbance as he might have. Three or four of his pals found opportunity to nod to him encouragingly when Miss Martin's atten-

tion was otherwise engaged. The Girl with the Pink Cheeks and the Biggest Eyes, managed to throw him a smile and a glance of pity that was very welcome indeed, and "Whitey" Jones, the boy whose name Douthet had refused to give, grinned provokingly at his damaged face. He could feel one of his eyes swelling a little, where he had struck the pavement when he fell, but he told himself that he could see well enough for that day's work. In the first pause that presented itself, he wrote a note to the boy who had sniggered, and passed it slyly, behind Miss Martin's back.

He wrote :

I'll wait for you in the Alley by the pump after school, and if you don't meet me there and fight it out *square*, look out when I catch you! I'll shove your sneaky face through the back of your head.

Respectfully,
D. P. G., JR.

As he read the ominous scrawl, "Whitey" Colvin felt his doom close upon him, but he thought by reading the note ostentatiously before the teacher's eye, to postpone the evil hour. He felt a little ill, and was in no mood to fight that day. It was Miss Martin's custom, of course, to seize all illicit communications and to keep the guilty author "after school," but to-day, for some unapparent reason, she was strangely inattentive, for she did not seem to notice "Whitey," though he went so far as to drop the scrap of paper on the floor before her very nose.

Then, through the rest of the afternoon, a presentiment of his downfall hovered, cloud-like, about "Whitey's" bowed head; a weight as of much undigested ginger-bread lay at the pit of his stomach, and his mouth went dry each time his fearful eye sought the clock. Vainly, and for the first time in his short career, he hoped that the session might never end.

With the coming of three o'clock, he thought wildly of flight, but "Piggy" Hastings, who had been Douthet Paul Grey, Junior's first victim, managed to get behind him in line, so it was a question of facing the music, or of having his cowardly fear of the encounter

dinned into his reddening ears by thirty or more scornful youths. After all, the fight was the lesser of the evils that confronted him, for with Douthet Paul's eye out of commission, and with various other tender spots on the youthful anatomy of his opponent, "Whitey" felt that he had a chance. He reminded himself gayly of the nervous fright so many brave soldiers have before a battle—and faced the issue.

When he reached the Alley, he found a great crowd already assembled, and in their midst, with his white starched cuffs rolled back, his curls flying in the wind, and a valiant battle-light in his one good eye, stood Douthet Paul Grey, Junior.

"Whitey" threw off his coat with a jeering grin, and rolled up his shirt-sleeves.

"Come on — you 'Cissy'!" he chanted provokingly, and with a polite little nod, Douthet complied.

The grocer's boy who saw it all from the top of a barrel reported afterward that it was a "swell scrap," but the verdict of the grocer's boy may be taken with a grain of salt. He did not see the very end, for so excited did he become that he danced up and down on the barrel until the head gave way beneath him. When he crawled out into daylight it was all over save for the brushing off of the dirt, and that is never very interesting.

Fully an hour after school-time, Charity heard a terrific racket on the front street before her door, and wise in the ways of her master, she put her turbaned head out of the front window to reconnoiter. There, to be sure, was Douthet himself, more ragged and dirty than he had been before, but on his swollen face dwelt the sunniest of sunny smiles, and from the throats of the dozen howling youngsters that followed in his wake, issued the reason, for they were yelling with might and main:

"Jackie! Whoop! Hurray! for Jackie!"

The despised sailor-suit, that had been the badge of his shame so long, had supplied him with a new nick-name, and so had become in the end, the sign of his triumph.



Parisian Fashion Model XXXIII C—From Life

By special contract with
REUTLINGER, PARIS

Maison Magraine-Lacroix:—DIRECTOIRE GOWN
of liberty silk and pleated black mousseline de soie.



Parisian Fashion Model XXXIV C—From Life

By special contract with
REUTLINGER, PARIS

Maison Magraine Lacroix:—DIRECTOIRE GOWN
of terra-cotta crêpe de chine.



Parisian Fashion Model XXXV C—From Life

By special contract with Maison Magraine-Lacroix:—DIRECTOIRE GOWN
REUTLINGER, PARIS of crêpe de chine, sleeves of tulle



Parisian Fashion Model XXXVI C—From Life

By special contract with
REUTLINGER, PARIS

Maison Magraine-Lacroix:—DIRECTOIRE GOWN
of Egyptian blue liberty silk, trimmed with gold em-
broroidered tulle.



Parisian Fashion Model XXXVII C—From Life

By special contract with
REUTLINGER, PARIS

Maison Ney-Sœurs:—Blue tailored gown trimmed
with soutache.



Parisian Fashion Model XXXVIII C—From Life

By special contract with
REUTLINGER, PARIS Maison Martial et Armand:—Costume of white voile
embroidered in white and gold.



Parisian Fashion Model XXXIX C—From Life

By special contract with
REUTLINGER, PARIS

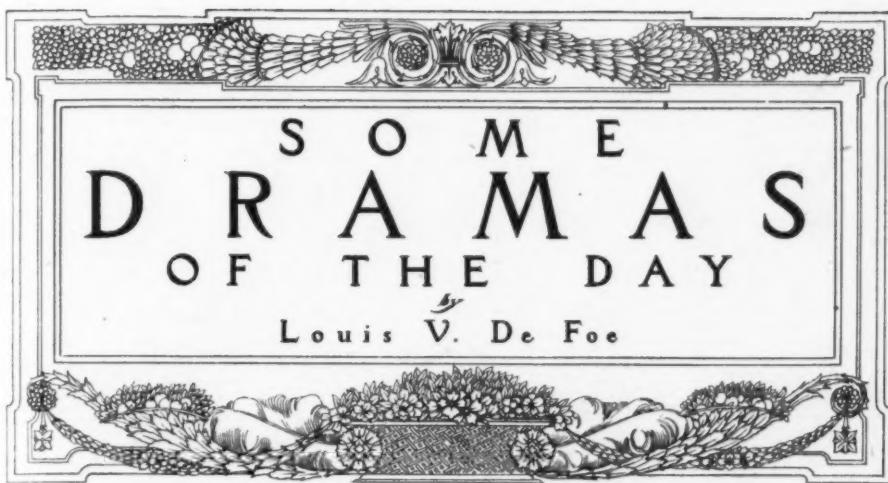
Maison Rondeau;—Costume of white muslin trimmed
with valenciennes embroidery.



Parisian Fashion Model XL C—From Life

By special contract with
REUTLINGER, PARIS

Maison Doenillet:—Costume of crêpe de soie, trimmed
with lace and silver embroidery.



LONDON.—It is not a very flattering tribute to the self-sustaining resources of our own dramatic art that one needs only to go to London in the Summer to gain a foretaste of the ensuing theatrical season in America. Though we are fast developing sturdy playwrights at home, and pride ourselves on our loyalty to them, their numbers are still not sufficient for the requirements of our theatres. In matters of art—and the art of the stage in particular—the two Anglo-Saxon peoples remain practically one and an element of strength in the drama of each is that its products are easily interchangeable. But we have not yet arrived at the point of complete reciprocity. We still acknowledge, tacitly, at least, a dependence upon the older English-speaking nation; we must admit that the trend of its stage each year has a distinct bearing upon our own.

In London, where the dramatic season is still at its height, Thespis continues to wear a smiling mask. The successful plays destined soon for American production include few that contain serious interests or vital force. Theatre-goers in England persist in regarding the stage lightly, so the only dramas of the year that have won real popularity are those which deal with the froth of social life. There is, indeed, only one notable exception to this rule. In his new play, "The

"Thunderbolt," Arthur Wing Pinero has dared to resist the prevailing taste. He has dipped his pen again in vitriol and, consequently, in spite of the admirable performance of his work by George Alexander's company at the St. James Theatre, he is paying the penalty of his temerity.

I would not venture to predict a very extensive popularity for "The Thunderbolt" even in America, where taste in the theatre runs along somewhat more serious lines. At the same time, I confess that it is a work of peculiar power and impressiveness which Charles Frohman, who has fallen heir to its American rights, will do well to produce. Should it fail to command attention, the reasons will be that its theme does not contain the elements of intimate interest and that its influence is to harrow and depress.

Mr. Pinero designates the play in the programs as "an episode in the history of a provincial family." Indeed, it is scarcely more, for at no time do its complications rise to the proportions of a plot. He has gone once more to middle-class provincial life for his characters and has built his story around the personality of a woman who is goaded into wrong-doing by the persecution of her husband's mercenary and abnormally selfish relatives. The characters are remorselessly drawn and the gloom their



George Alexander in the London Cast of "The Thunderbolt."

deeds create is not softened even by a love-story. In fact, there is almost a venomous spirit in Mr. Pinero's vivid, forcibly written work.

You know the people with whom he deals almost as soon as the curtain rises. The scene is a house of mourning. *Edward*, the eldest son of the family of *Mortimores*, lies dead in an up-stairs room and below, in the darkened parlor, are gathered his brothers and their wives, all eager for their share of the mortuary loot. *Edward*, who was a bachelor, was somewhat different from the others. While they had remained poor and pretentiously moral, he had accumulated a fortune of \$1,000,000 and led an irregular and questionable life.

In the greedy circle of expectant mourners are *James Mortimore*, a blustering contractor and *Ann*, his half-imbecile wife; *Stephen*, a hypocritical country-editor; *Louisa*, his talkative and officious helpmeet; *Thaddeus* and his wife, *Phyllis*, the former a poor music-teacher, who has gained the contempt of

the rest by marrying a grocer's daughter, and *Rose*, an arrant *parvenu* whose husband is a retired army-officer. There are a few others in the cast, but except for *Helen Thornhill*, *Edward*'s illegitimate child, they do not matter much.

The question agitating the *Mortimores* is whether or not *Edward* left a will. No such document is to be found, so the family is eagerly anticipating an equal division of the property. Of course, *Helen Thornhill* must be considered, but she is regarded only as a dependent on the bounty of the rest. When she indignantly refuses their niggardly provisions *Phyllis*, the wife of *Thaddeus*, rises to make a vehement plea in her behalf. Straightway the play assumes new complications. You immediately begin to expect what is to follow.

In the next act the facts in the case begin to come out. Just before a final meeting of the relatives, at which the division of the estate is to be made, *Phyllis* confesses to her husband that, contrary to the belief of the rest, *Edward* had left



Act III in Arthur Wing Pinero's new play "The Thunderbolt,"—the London production.



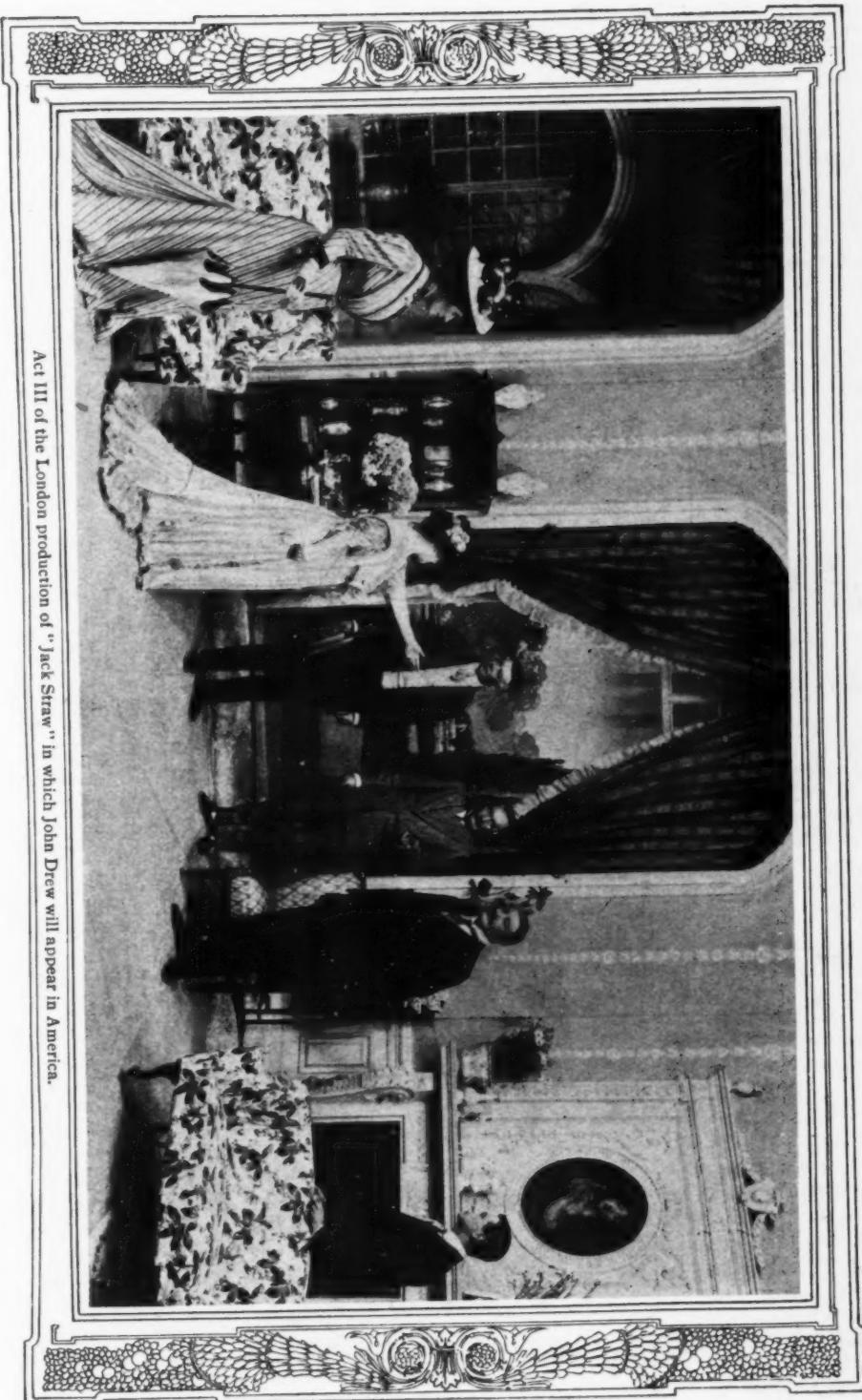
Miss Ethel Irving and Mr. Lowes in the London production of "Lady Frederick."

a will in which he had bequeathed his entire fortune to his illegitimate daughter. Goaded to desperation by her poverty and the indignities she had endured from the others, *Phyllis* had destroyed the paper while nursing the sick man in his last hours and had thrown the pieces into the river. The gentleness and consideration of *Helen* had led her to repent her act. So she is now ready to make what reparation she can. The blow of the confession falls upon *Thaddeus* with crushing force, and the end of the scene finds him setting out for the meeting, prepared to take upon himself the burden of his wife's guilt.

The meeting at which *Thaddeus'* broken-hearted confession is made is drawn by the dramatist with remarkable skill. The brothers and their wives, gathered in the dining-room of *James'* house, are busy with pencil and paper figuring out their respective shares of the property. Consternation seizes them when *Thaddeus'* disclosures are made. The others pour upon him the venom of

their wrath. But they are a shrewd lot. In their angry cross-examination *Thaddeus'* story gradually breaks down. They soon guess at the truth and suspect that he is attempting to shield his wife. The family solicitor, who is present, is asked the penalty for *Phyllis'* offense. When he replies that it may be seven years' penal servitude, gleams of cruel satisfaction light up the faces of the *Mortimores* and they withdraw, leaving *Thaddeus* to weep out his grief alone.

Here enters the inevitable sop to the conventional prejudices of the theatre. *Phyllis*, the only character in the play drawn with a sympathetic touch, must not suffer for her crime. The generosity of the despised, illegitimate daughter must save her. So in the first act, *Helen Thornhill* magnanimously proposes to share and share alike with the mercenary *Mortimores*, but under the condition that one portion of the estate be given to charity. A compromise of this kind looks dangerously like compounding a felony, so the lawyers withdraw, leaving the



Act III of the London production of "Jack Straw" in which John Drew will appear in America.

family, if mutually satisfied, to do as they wish. For the sake of *Helen's* future it is intimated, just before the last curtain falls, that she will wed a meek young curate who has been trotting at her heels.

A story of cupidity and greed, with a background of crime committed under resentful impulse, is not calculated to have a very cheerful influence upon an audience. Nor can the lifelike drawing of its characters and the great cleverness of the dialogue compensate for the slender interest of the plot. Consequently, "The Thunderbolt," in spite of its clever satire and keen analysis of mean, middle-class natures, comes a long way from measuring up to Mr. Pinero's best work. An important stepping-stone to its possible success in America will be the exactness with which the characters of the author's imagination are portrayed. It is scarcely to be hoped, however, that an equal can be found to George Alexander as *Thaddeus*, notwithstanding that he is as unsuccessful as ever in veiling his

own personality. Miss Mabel Hackney impersonates *Phyllis*, in the English cast, with much emotional intensity, and all the others are admirable in their respective parts—except Miss Stella Campbell who, as *Helen Thornhill*, betrays that she has not yet advanced beyond her novitiate as an actress. At the moment of writing plans for the American presentation are not complete.

THE most successful playwright of the present London season is W. Somerset Maugham who, until a year past, was known in the theatrical world only as a persistent peddler of unacceptable manuscripts. About ten months ago his "Lady Frederick" was reluctantly given a production at the remote little Court Theatre. It met with instantaneous

favor and Mr. Maugham's success as a playwright was established in a night. Managers who had discouraged him immediately began to clamor for his manuscripts, and he has scarcely been able to dig into his trunk fast enough to keep pace with the demand. With four comedies now being acted simultaneously in the fashionable theatres of the West End, Mr. Maugham has established a new record for London and equalled the New York record of our prolific Clyde Fitch. Best of all, he takes his honors easily. If he is elated by his great turn of fortune there surely is nothing in his manner which betrays it

Charles Frohman has secured Mr. Maugham's plays for production in America, and at least two will be seen as soon as the season opens in the Autumn. "Lady Frederick," by far the best of the current quartet, will be offered with Miss Ethel Barrymore in its title rôle, while "Jack Straw," in which Charles Hawtrey is appearing at the Vaudeville Theatre, will be devoted to



Charles Hawtrey, the London *Jack Straw*



John Drew, who will play *Jack Straw* in America



the uses of John Drew. "Miss Dot," a little piece of fragile texture, which Miss Marie Tempest is carrying to great success at Mr. Frohman's Comedy Theatre, will not be seen in America until she decides to cross the ocean, probably a year hence. The arrangement is wise, for Miss Tempest's absence from the cast would be almost sure to jeopardize the play's success. What becomes of the fourth, "The Explorer," does not matter so much. At any rate, no disposition of it has yet been made.

I am not so sure that Mr. Maugham's suddenly acquired vogue is built on a rock. As yet he has shown no symptom of being able to look beneath the mere surface of life. But there is no doubt that he deals gracefully, even brilliantly at times, with its superficialities. His easily flowing dialogue sparkles with epigram, although often his smart speeches have the strained ring of being made to order. He sketches characters cleverly and sets them in simple plots which, however, never betray great evidence of constructive skill. If he grows theatrical at times, the defect of unnaturalness is generally covered by sudden changes in the action and queer, unexpected conceits.

It is unfortunate that the title rôle of "Lady Frederick" could not have fallen into the hands of an actress better qualified than Miss Barrymore to express its full flavor. Miss Barrymore, perhaps, may prove equal to its demands, and until she is seen in the part judgment in her case must be deferred. But with Miss Henrietta Crossman, for instance, as its engaging, impulsive Irish heroine, the play would be sure to meet with complete success.

Only by Mr. Maugham's ingenuity does *Lady Frederick* escape becoming a polite adventuress. She is a woman of title in the middle thirties who, as a girl, was married to a drunkard and scamp. Ten years of unhappy existence followed, when her release came through her husband's death. Not long after this auspicious event she lost her only child. Then *Lady Frederick* sets out to make up for the pleasures denied her in her girlhood. At the opening of the play she is at Monte Carlo, going the fast pace of

the fashionables. She is hopelessly in debt and creditors are pressing her hard. "I have squandered money as other women take morphia," she admits. Besides, her brother, *Sir Gerald O'Mara*, who is on the point of becoming engaged to *Rose*, the daughter of *Admiral Carlisle*, has put himself at the mercy of a money-shark for a gambling-debt.

With her quick Irish wit and charming brogue *Lady Frederick* resolutely sets about to clear away the threatening clouds. Among her many suitors is *Lord Mereston*, a mere youth, with whose millionaire uncle, *Paradine Fouldes*, she once came dangerously near to an intrigue. *Fouldes* has suddenly appeared on the scene, at his sister's request, to rescue young *Moreston*, her son, from his infatuation. The duel between the two is to be one of quick wit and each holds a trump card.

There are two methods by which *Lady Frederick* might clear away her pecuniary difficulties. She could accept the \$200,000 which *Fouldes* offers if she will dismiss his nephew, or marry *Captain Montgomerie*, the socially ambitious money-lender who has gained possession of both her own and her brother's notes. However, she prefers to travel a more difficult road to emancipation. Having flouted even old *Captain Carlisle's* offer of marriage, she prepares to resist the combined assaults of *Fouldes* and *Lady Mereston*. She has warned the former not to press her too hard, for she holds letters which reveal that his sister's supposedly moral husband, now deceased, was once infatuated with a dancer.

But *Lady Mereston* thinks she also holds a trump card in the game. She has a letter in *Lady Frederick's* own handwriting which points to a questionable escapade in her previous career. When the two women meet, *Lady Mereston* fires the first cruel volley. The charge which she brings, indeed, seems reasonable. But, as *Paradine Fouldes* points out, he is willing to believe *Lady Frederick's* explanation because a woman, so smart and resourceful, if guilty, would have invented a much more plausible defense.

When *Lady Frederick's* turn came she makes use of it by deliberately casting



Beryl Faber, in "Lady Frederick."



The Comedy lovers in "Havana."

the incriminating letters about old *Mereston's* irregularities into the fire. This clever ruse has the result she expects, for young *Mereston*, impressed by her magnanimity, promptly proposes marriage. Here, at last, is her avenue of escape from many troubles. But, to the surprise of the rest, *Lady Frederick* reserves her answer until the next day.

In the final act *Lord Mereston* comes to learn his fate and surprises *Lady Frederick* making her morning-toilet. By elaborate means she sets about to cure him of his infatuation. She makes him a spectator as she puts on her healthy complexion and pencils under her eyes the soulful shadows he has admired so often. She lets him see that her auburn hair is only a vulgar commercial commodity. The young fool becomes blind to the sterling woman beneath the surface and retires actually elated at his rejection. *Paradine Fouldes* soon drops in and learns the circumstances. He is a man of the world, who is not as blind as his nephew to the true nature of a woman. *Lady Frederick's* magnanimity in sparing the reputation of his sister's sanctimonious husband serves to rekindle in his heart the flame that burned hotly many years before. There is a romantic scene, the result of which is that as *Fouldes'* fiancée *Lady Frederick* at last sees a break in the thickly gathering clouds.

It will be perceived that there are many doubtful details to this cleverly contrived story. But although theatrical to a degree, it is ingenious in its development and *Lady Frederick*, with her sudden bursts of temper and unexpected outbursts of generosity, is a charming heroine. In the London production Miss Ethel Irving is lending her attractive personality to the rôle and most of the supporting members of her company are as well qualified for their parts as could reasonably be desired.

IN "Jack Straw" which, with John Drew in its cast, is to be produced at the Empire Theatre in New York on the first Monday in September, Mr. Maugham has hit upon a less original theme, but he has developed it with quite as

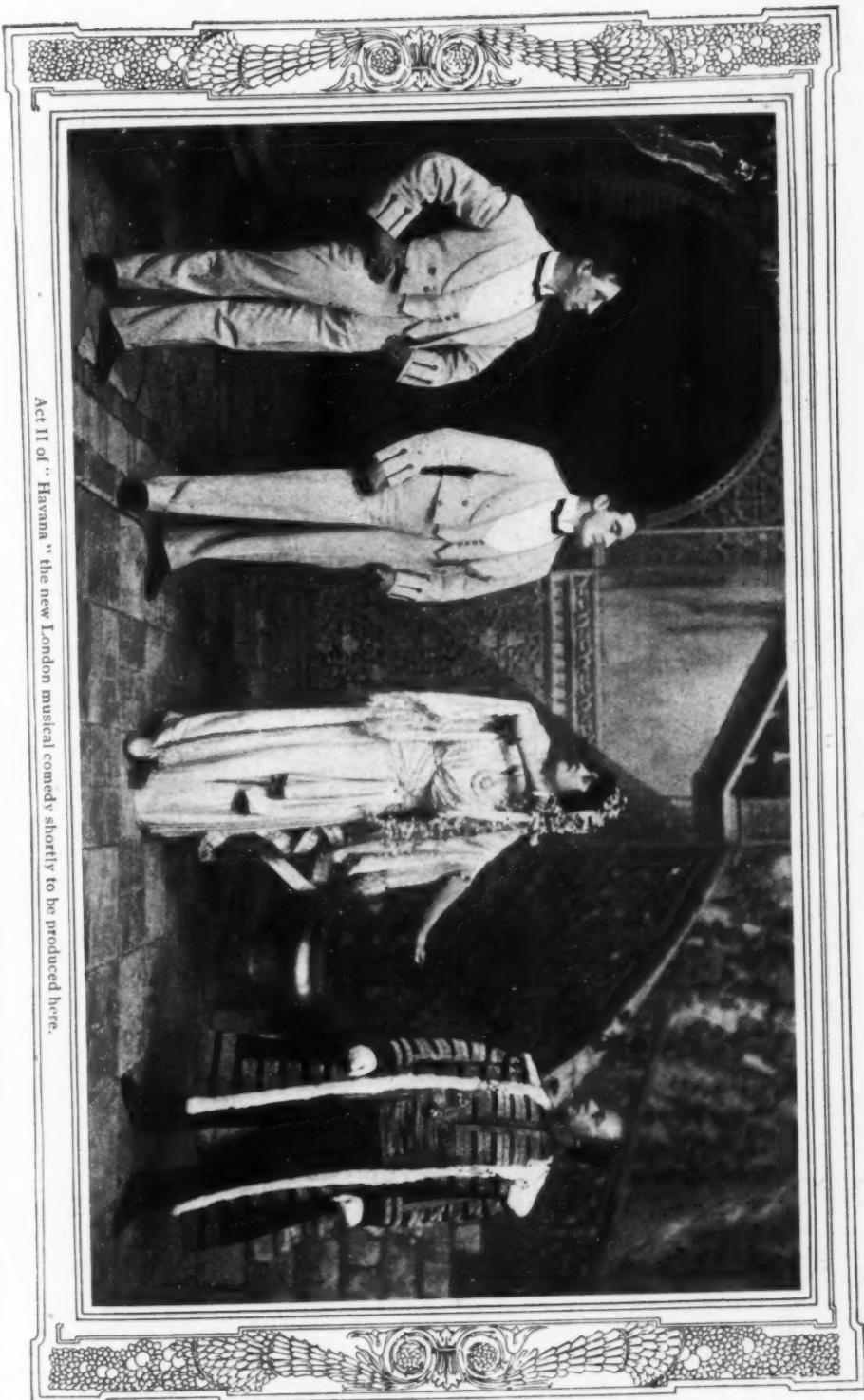
much verbal wit and an even greater amount of humor. This little play is somewhat reminiscent of Booth Tarkington's "Monsieur Beaucaire," for its hero is an aristocrat who has become a menial, and he is represented as masquerading under his legitimate title. The fault of the story is that it is too thinly veiled. You are able to guess its outcome almost at the beginning, but even this serious imperfection does not seriously mar its humorous interest.

Jack Straw is really the *Archduke Sebastian of Pomerania*, and a grandson of the *King*. When he became infatuated with a ballet-dancer, she was banished from the country. He followed her, but learning that she was already equipped with several questionable husbands, he decided to roam the world *incognito* and pick up a living as best he might. At one time he was an actor, and it was in this capacity that he became acquainted with *Ambrose Holland*, whom he meets again while serving as a waiter in the lounge of the Grand Babylon Hotel, London.

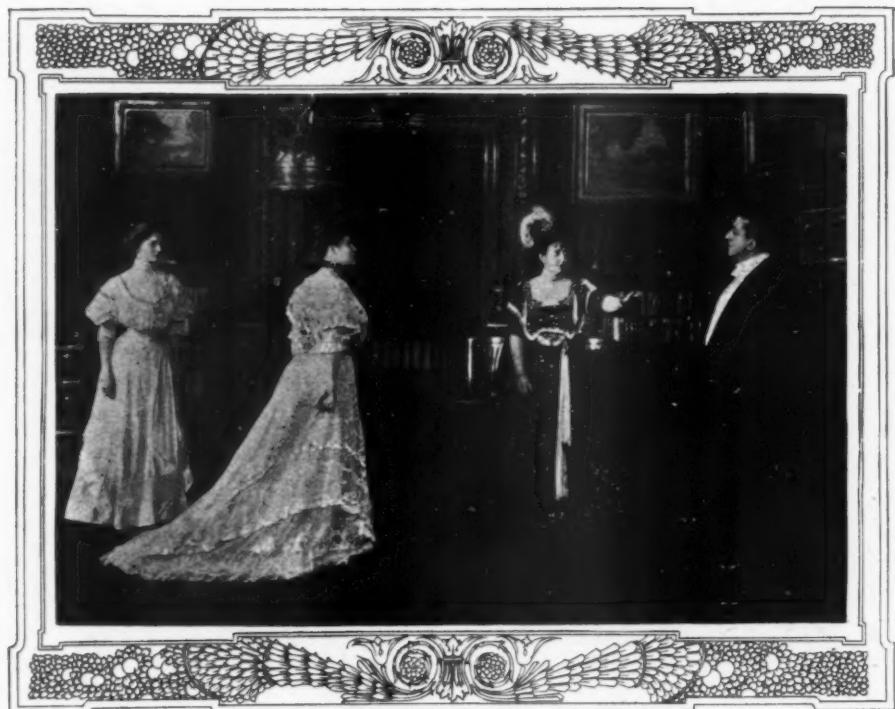
The most conspicuous party in the lounge are the *Parker-Jennings*—father, mother, son, and daughter—all vulgar *parvenus*, except the daughter, *Ethel*, who appears to be heartily ashamed of her rich family's ill-breeding. *Mrs. Parker-Jennings* outrageously snubs *Rosie Abbott*, who is a friend of *Lady Wanley*. *Ambrose Holland's* companion, *Lady Wanley* resents the insult and resolves to make *Mrs. Parker-Jennings* smart for her bad behavior. What would be better than to have *Holland* induce his friend, the waiter, to pose as a great nobleman and meet the *Parker-Jennings'*, whom she will afterward humiliate by exposing their great friend's real station in life?

Jack Straw falls in with the plot. The only condition he dictates is that he impersonate the *Archduke Sebastian* of Pomerania. The bargain is struck, and presently the waiter reappears in faultless dress and is introduced. The curtain falls with the *parvenus* assiduously cultivating their new acquaintance.

In the next scene the *Parker-Jennings* have carried their great social acquisition off to their splendid country-place in Cheshire, where they are about to introduce him to the aristocratic people of the



Act II of "Havana" the new London musical comedy shortly to be produced here.



A scene from "The Witching Hour" shortly to be presented in London.

neighborhood at a grand garden-party given in his honor. By this time, however, *Lady Wanley* has decided that the joke has proceeded far enough, and beseeches *Jack Straw* to disappear. She threatens to expose him, but he remains imperturbable. The splendor of English country-life pleases him. Besides, he is falling in love with *Ethel*, the *Parker-Jennings'* attractive daughter.

While the guests are assembling, *Lady Wanley* makes known the truth and the *Parker-Jennings* fly into a fit of vulgar rage at the imposition. They order *Jack Straw* from the house, but he refuses to go. He is master of the situation, for how will they explain his absence to their guests? So the garden-party proceeds and *Jack Straw* has a jolly time with the expensive wines and his hosts' obsequious guests.

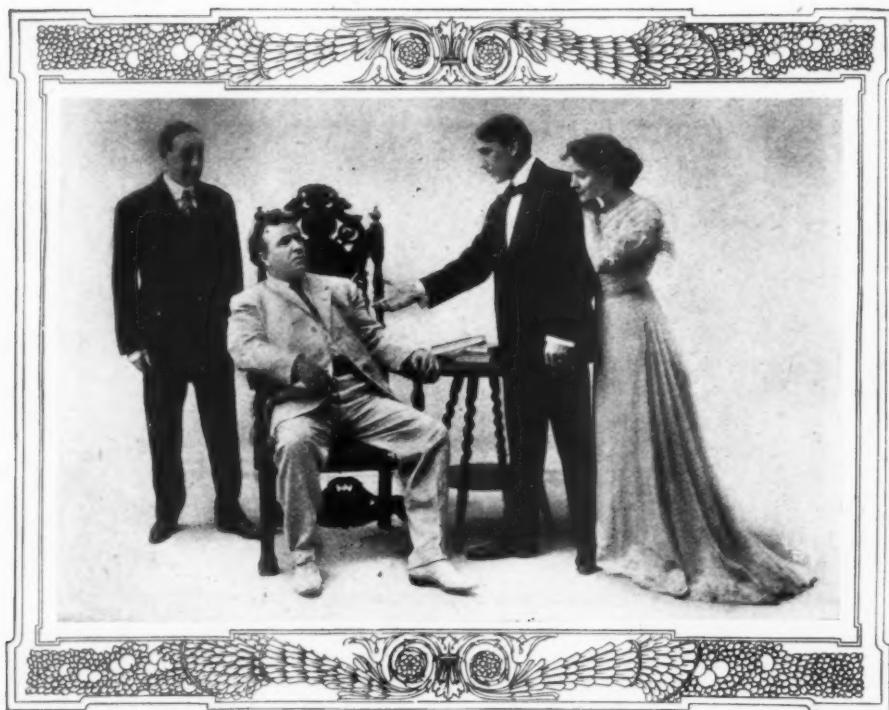
On the next day the threats of calling the police are renewed. For the six months of imprisonment the imposter is sure to get, the *Parker-Jennings'* will incur years of ridicule wherever they go.

And what sport the London newspapers will have at their expense! Thus the wrangle continues until, through the Pomeranian ambassador, who has known *Sebastian* since boyhood, *Jack Straw* is found to be exactly what he claimed to be from the first. Eventually he marries *Ethel* and, of course, as is the way among comedy heroes, comes in for his share of the great estate.

The story, told with bright speeches and briskly moving incidents, is more entertaining than the baré recital of its details seems to indicate. It is preposterous to a degree and as light as thistle-down, but it makes no pretensions other than to be a lively bit of nonsense. Its title-rôle furnishes Charles Hawtrey with the best character he has had in years, for his happiest acting is in the display of amiable mendacity. John Drew, too, ought to be able to act the part cleverly. His only serious drawback will be that he is slightly too old for *Jack Straw*, as Mr. Maugham has drawn the character.



Scene from Act I of George Bernard Shaw's "Getting Married"



A scene from "Paid in Full," which goes to London this season.

MUSICAL comedy has not relaxed its strong hold on public favor in London, although the writers of this fanciful kind of entertainment this season have not been nearly as prolific as in other years. "The Merry Widow" still reigns supreme, and none of the English productions of the present time is likely to dethrone it. "My Mimosa Maid" contains neither the merry jingles nor bright chatter that are expected of the authors of "Miss Hook of Holland," but "Havana," a production by George Edwardes, in which a syndicate of librettists have written a capital story set to some charming music by Leslie Stuart, promises to make hosts of friends and enjoy a prosperous career when, a little later, it is transported to America. Indeed, if its present company could be sent across the ocean intact, a miniature triumph could be prophesied for it. What will be its fate, if left to stolid show girls of the usual brand, no one can safely foretell.

Havana, with its dark-eyed *señoritas*, sunlit market-places, and gay to-

bacco-shops, is now, for the first time, singled out for the depredations of musical comedy. The story into which three beautiful scenes are woven deals with the adventures of a party of English tourists who arrive in a yacht during an insurrection in Cuba. They are mistaken for a filibustering expedition, and all sorts of humorous mishaps ensue until the *Hon. Frank Charteris* makes love to *Consuelo*, the *Mayor's* daughter and rescues her from a distasteful marriage. Meanwhile, *Nix*, the yacht's bo'sun, after frantic efforts to elude her, is captured by the wife whom he deserted during a previous visit to that port.

All the usual stock-characters appear in "Havana," but the most attractive of the lot are eight pretty English girls on a visit to the Antilles as guests of a London newspaper. These charming little sprites have captured the three best numbers in the score, and they sing them in a manner that is truly delightful. But there is not a song in the piece that does not help to make it attractive and this,



A Scene from Act III of George Bernard Shaw's new comedy "Getting Married."

together with the color-harmonies of the expensive costuming, has made "Havana" a piece which, I think, will be quite sure to steal into the favor of lovers of that kind of entertainment in all our big American cities. In London it is one of the pronounced musical successes of the year.

BEFORE the production of "Getting Married," George Bernard Shaw proclaimed that he had written the play—the programs at the Haymarket Theatre call it a "conversation"—to spite the stupid London newspapers and the still more stupid London critics. Against the latter, at least, he obtained his revenge for he bored them outrageously. And he is equally successful in wearying everyone else who attempts to sit through more than two hours of disconnected talk. Not that the piece fails to emit occasional sparks of amusing paradox and witty satire. The seer of Adelphi Terrace manages to be entertaining, for a time, at least. The most serious faults with his freakish play are its prolixity and the author's tendency in the final act to repeat himself.

It would be impossible to describe what "Getting Married" is all about. A company of people, with varying opinions on the problem of matrimony, meet in the Norman kitchen of the *Bishop of Chelsea's* palace to celebrate the marriage of his daughter, *Edith Bridgewater*, to *Cecil Sykes*. They then proceed to ventilate their views—or, more properly, Shaw's views. One of the characters is a middle-aged woman bent on remaining an old maid. Another is an army-officer, her persistent suitor. There is an accommodating husband who has struck his wife before witnesses in order that she may obtain a divorce and marry another man. The *Bishop*, whose views of matrimony are decidedly unorthodox, is on hand with his amiable wife. There are other characters, more or less vague, among whom is an Aldermanic green-grocer, created in the mould of *William*, the waiter, in "You Never Can Tell."

Most astounding arguments for and against matrimony are advanced until matters are brought to an abrupt turn

by an announcement that there is to be no wedding. The prospective bride and bridegroom, it seems, have been reading tracts and have come to the conclusion that neither can assume the responsibility of the other's actions. Then the discussion reopens on these new lines and it is finally decided to draw up a marriage-contract. But this plan fails because the characters disagree over the first article that is to be put into it. Meanwhile, the prospective bride and bridegroom slip out and presently return to announce that the ceremony has been performed.

The cleverness with which certain parts of the dialogue are written does not disguise the facts that, like most of Shaw's other plays, its pretended philosophy is shallow and its effect is likely to be pernicious. The last half of it, in addition, is a monumental bore.

At the beginning of this letter I spoke of a reciprocity in the matter of the drama between England and America and lest the reader may conclude that such reciprocity is "all on one side," if the bull be permissible, I hasten to add that even now another American theatrical invasion of London is planned.

Several of the most pronounced successes of the past seasons in America, if their managers may be depended upon to keep their promises, will be presented before British audiences ere long.

For instance, there is Mr. Augustus Thomas' drama, "The Witching Hour," perhaps the most important American play of the past five years—to speak conservatively. London theatre-goers have heard much of this play, and in a measure are prepared for it as they should be for a play treating as it does of a subject heretofore avoided by contemporary dramatists.

The same may be said of Mr. Walter's play, "Paid in Full." One wonders if Mr. Walter's Harlem flat will be accepted at its dramatic face-value by the pit- and stall-dwellers of the Strand. If Mr. Walter's characters really are human, they are, of course, every whit as much so in England as here; none the less, the British acceptance—or rejection—of this play will be significant.